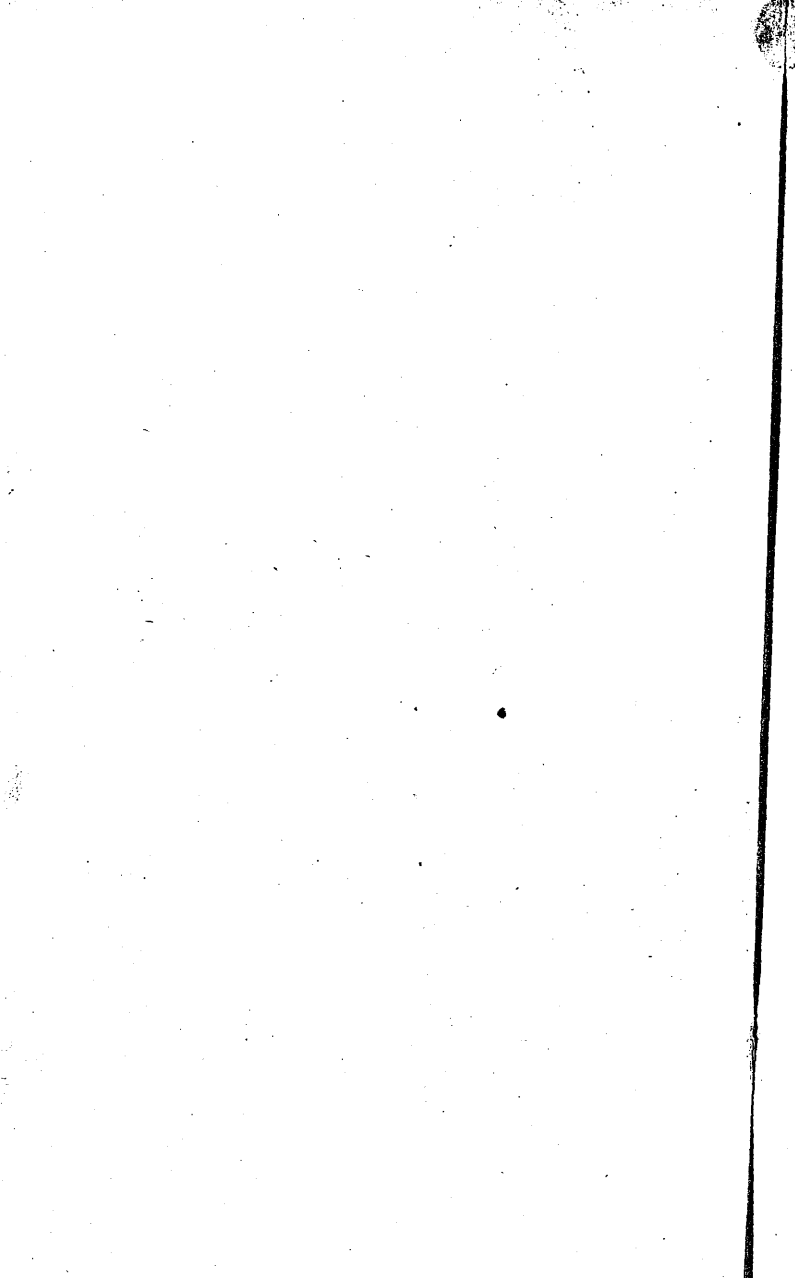


The University of Chicago
Libraries



DURRETT COLLECTION

4.5
R



Bible. N. S. Revelation. End Book

NOTES ILLUSTRATIVE

OF THE

MEANING AND APPLICATION OF THE FIGURES EMPLOYED

BY

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

IN THE

REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

BY REV. JAMES P. GARDNER.

Scripture best illustrates the meaning of Scripture language; for "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation."—2 Peter i. 20.

NASHVILLE, TENN.:

PUBLISHED BY A. H. REDFORD, AGENT, FOR THE AUTHOR.

1867.

BS 3826
.G22

~~A25~~
~~G226~~

INT
VIA
TO
VIA
VIA

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1867, by
JAMES P. GARDNER,
in the District Court of the United States for the Middle District of Tennessee.

R. CULLIN, STEREOTYPER, SOUTHERN METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE.

473693

NOTES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

GARDNER.

INTRODUCTION.

IN commenting on a general prophecy, it most certainly is of the very first importance that the writer should take the most enlarged and comprehensive view of the prophecy. And especially so with the Apocalypse, as the professedly universal scope of this great apostolic prophet, who is so imperatively commanded to write, not only as all other prophets had done in all preceding ages, giving mankind a view of future events, is entirely unlimited, for he is absolutely commanded to write the things which have already transpired, the things which are now transpiring, and the things which shall be hereafter. And that the connection may be natural, and the style every way appropriate, the whole is conceived and embodied in symbolic language. The advantages accruing from this last simple fact are greater than they might seem to the casual observer; for, having in this way the light of partial fulfillment shining upon the prophecy, from the very hour in which it was recorded, we have, also, the almost inconceivably great advantage of becoming somewhat familiar with the apostle's use and application of many of the beautiful emblems and sublime figures to past great scenes in the world's history. And when we remember that he must be, and unquestionably is, consistent with himself, and that these emblems and figures, representing the things which, in connection with others, have been employed to represent future events, the commentator enjoys the very great advantage of allowing the inspired prophet to interpret his own dark sayings. And this advantage is enhanced at every onward step, as the light of ful-

fulfillment serves continually to increase the number of interpretations of these sayings. And, while we cannot possibly overestimate the importance of the fact, that the student of this, the very greatest of all the great prophecies contained in the great Book of God's inspiration, must take a very general and widely comprehensive view of this sublimely grand picture, he must, on the other hand, take a very narrowly accurate view of the picture, and be exceedingly careful not to allow one single word or allusion to escape his vigilance; for it is, most certainly, a false modesty to say, as students and interpreters of this prophecy have generally done, that this precision is above and beyond their capacity, consequently they do not attempt it. We may compare the importance of this idea to the absolute necessity with the mathematical student, of diligently clearing away every difficulty in his course, and of making himself master of every principle as he proceeds, because mathematical science embodies certain indispensable principles, which are not only necessary in constituting the science a perfect whole, but each of the several parts is equally necessary in order to an understanding of the other parts. We are not unapprised of the fact that this is saying a great deal for the harmony of this grand picture, brought to view in the symbolic language of this great prophecy; but we maintain that it is impossible to exaggerate in human language, or by comparing it with human science, this picture, whether we contemplate its harmony, its symmetry, its beauty, its grandeur, its sublimity, its perfection; for it is done and finished by a master-hand, guided by divine light, divine truth, and the divine will. We desire here to free ourselves from all suspicion of being so presumptuous as to believe, or even indulge the vain hope, that we have succeeded in interpreting correctly, and in applying properly, all the emblems and figures in this vast assemblage of imagery, which will, most certainly, never be fully and perfectly accomplished until the last scene of the vast panorama has passed before the mind of the student of these scenes. Men may, from age to age, by the ever-increasing light of fulfillment, continue to remove difficulties and obviate errors in these interpretations, but until the perfect *light of the city* of God shall dispel the last lingering shades of ignorance and of error we must content

ourselves as best we can, with imperfection in this as well as in all other human endeavors. But we still wish to say, emphatically, that we believe, and we are fully persuaded, that to take the most general view of the grand outline of this picture, and the most special and scrutinizing view of all its parts, is the very best method of arriving at the greatest possible amount of truth in reference to it, and of leaving it blurred with the least possible amount of error.

Dr. A. Clarke, in his Commentary, has a good idea well expressed, which he applies to this prophecy as a whole. Here it is:

"A conjecture concerning the *design* of the book may be safely indulged: thus, then, it has struck me, that *the book of the Apocalypse may be considered as a PROPHECY continued in the Church of God, uttering predictions relative to all times, which have their successive fulfillment as ages roll on; and thus it stands in the Christian Church in the place of the SUCCESSION OF PROPHETS in the Jewish Church; and by this especial economy PROPHECY is STILL CONTINUED, is ALWAYS SPEAKING; and yet a succession of prophets rendered unnecessary.* If this be so," (we would rather say as this is so,) "we cannot too much admire the wisdom of the contrivance which still continues the voice and testimony of prophecy, by means of a very short book, without the assistance of any extraordinary messenger, or any succession of such messengers, whose testimony would at all times be liable to suspicion, and be the subject of infidel and malevolent criticism, howsoever unexceptionable to ingenuous minds the credentials of such might appear."

To demonstrate the position that all this is more than conjecture, the reader is referred to the notes on the sixth, eighth, and ninth chapters, and to the history there quoted. It is, most certainly, the legitimate province of the commentator to interpret the figures of a fulfilled prophecy, and to apply the prophecy to the time and place of its fulfillment, when the history of the times is found to corroborate the interpretation, and to verify the correctness of such application. As the justness of this position will not be questioned, when applied to a prophecy, all the parts of which have had their fulfillment, so, we think, it will also be admitted, when applied to the great fulfilled parts of a general

prophecy, when some of these parts occupy many years, and other distinct parts of it even sweep over many centuries. And again, when the light of fulfillment has developed figures employed by a prophet, and the same prophet still employs these figures in parts of his prophecy not yet fulfilled, some just ideas, by these helps, may be obtained even of scenes yet in the future. And thus we see that it is neither vain, idle, nor foolish, to study prophecy. Moreover, if prophecy is to be profitable at all, it can be so only by being understood; and, if it is not to be profitable, then would not the All-wise God have inspired and commanded men to write it.

We must not fail here to notice a mistake made by almost all interpreters of this prophecy, which has, perhaps, been the source of more errors—and even of signal failures—than any other one thing, and, perhaps, than all things else combined. We allude to the almost uniform course, in the mode of interpretation, of taking it for granted that uniform chronological order in all the scenes of this prophecy, from the beginning of the first chapter to the close of the last one, is observed. And, in fact, interpreters seem never to have thought of the impracticability of such a course; whereas, no historian, in narrating past events, has thought such a course practicable, or even attempted it; but the general plan has been, to take up one scene, and to pursue it to its result; and then to take up another scene, occupying, in some instances, the same ground, in point of time, or, perhaps, including some previous or some after-time, or both, or only part of the same period, and to pursue it to its legitimate result. And, again, in some instances, the plan of the historian has been to take up only one feature, in an important scene, and to pursue it through, and then another feature of the same scene, noting the effects of each in its influence upon human society—which is the very best use of history. And shall we not allow the prophet the same privilege? Nor does any painter ever think of placing an image on canvas by beginning at one side or end, and of delineating, painting, and finishing the picture as he advances with the work toward the other side or end. Neither does the sculptor ever think of bringing out an image from the block of marble by beginning at one end or side, and of forming, finishing, and pol-

ishing it as he advances with his work toward the other end or side. Even to intimate, as we have done, such a procedure, is ludicrous; and yet learned interpreters have thought to understand, and attempted to explain, this, the greatest of all the grand pictures ever painted in human language, by the most sublime imagery ever grouped together by any writer, in any age, on any subject, in this unreasonable and wholly impracticable way. In our humble judgment, such a mode of interpretation never was, nor can it ever be, successful. But the great apostolic prophet has, most certainly, pursued the natural method of first sketching the outline of his picture, and then of more fully delineating its parts, then of going over again and painting some of its prominent features; and of going back, again and again, and passing over the work, painting feature after feature, developing scene after scene, of his grand design, until, with his divinely inspired pencil, he gives it the last, the finishing touches; thus presenting it at last, before the mind of the reader, a finished piece of work. Thus anticipating the plan of the work, I am much aided in interpreting in the following NOTES the meaning of this great prophecy. I cannot, however, with every available help, expect to interpret every thing in it correctly; but *if I could, I would dip my pen in the pellucid waters of heaven, and, though they are quite colorless and pure, yet, in the unrivaled colors of the bow of promise itself, which well represents the light of truth shining upon multitudes of people, would I trace the true meaning and proper application of all the sublime imagery in this most wonderful book, that the attention of the generations—of all the generations—following, might be arrested; that they might read and understand; that they might pray and believe; that they might take courage and go forward toward the great goal—the final destiny—of all the sealed of God, the New Jerusalem of which Christ, their King, is the Temple and the Light.*

J. P. GARDNER.

PADUCAH, KY., February 23, 1867.

THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction. 4 *John writeth his Revelation to the seven Churches of Asia signified by the seven golden candlesticks.*
7 *The coming of Christ.* 14 *His glorious power and majesty.*

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John :

NOTES.—CHAPTER I.

Verse 1 *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*,—The prophecies by the ancient seers foretelling the coming of Messiah; his actual nativity; the gracious words he spake while he—the divine teacher—walked and talked, wept and rejoiced, with his disconsolate, but highly-favored creatures; shedding light, and life, and glory, upon the Christian church, with its sacred ordinances and gloriously divine privileges and blessings; his painful, shameful, and tragical death; his resurrection from the tomb, and his advocacy before his Father's throne, are but parts of his gracious designs toward, and more than gracious doings for, the fallen race; almost infinitely important, and sublimely interesting parts, to be sure; but then, here is this *revelation* of the development of all his gracious purposes toward man through all coming ages,

2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words

until he at last, "through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and belief of the truth," shall be brought to dwell in the eternal city described in the sequel, of which God himself is the temple and the light. *Shortly* here, as *quickly*, chap. xxii. 7, 12, 20, and in other places, may have reference more especially to the certainty that these things will occur, than to the time of their occurrence. *And he sent and signified it*—Adumbrated, foreshadowed it, by the use of appropriate figures, *unto his servant John*. This entire *revelation*, as is clearly stated here, and reiterated in many other places in the course of these revealments, is by the ministry of an angel or messenger sent from God, to communicate *unto his servant John*.

Verse 2 *Who bare record of the word of God*,—This *word*, or *revelation of God*—a large portion of which has already had its fulfillment since the commencement of the period embraced in it, the demonstration of the truth of which may be gathered from the world's history during this period to the present time—certainly does bear as clear testimony to the divine claims of Jesus Christ as any reasonable man could desire, or as could be furnished to the mind of man—constituted as he is—by Inspiration itself. And while *the word* bears unequivocal testimony, in the strongest and most emphatic language—as we shall see in many places—to the truly divine nature of Jesus Christ, the *record* itself is not wanting in testimony to its divinely-inspired authority, the internal evidence of which is truly abundant, and absolutely irresistible.

Verse 3 *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy*,—The blessedness here pronounced

of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein : for the time is at hand.

4 **J**OHN to the seven churches which are in Asia : Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come ; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne ;

upon the diligent reader, the attentive hearer, and faithful keeper, of the *words of this prophecy*, together with other kindred ideas in the introduction and other parts of this chapter, have their corresponding ideas, which may be easily traced in the benediction at the close of the prophecy, and in other parts of the last chapter. And—as we shall see—in each of the addresses to *the seven churches in Asia*, the opening language has its corresponding idea or ideas in its close, and a chain of similar ideas may be traced through each address. And we may also add, that this symmetry and harmony appears in the highest degree of perfection and beauty in the selection and application of the many highly sublime figures of this truly wonderful book.

Verse 4 *John to the seven churches which are in Asia* :—St. John, in addressing his *revelation* to this definite number of individual *churches* in a specified place, must not be understood as rendering it applicable to these alone, for it certainly is applicable, and should be understood as being addressed, to all the church of God, in every place, and for all time to come. The fact, however, of these addresses being made and directed to individual *churches* actually existing at the time, settles for ever the question as to whether the meaning and application of these prophecies should have a natural or a purely spiritual interpretation. *Grace*, or favor, *be unto you*—without which no *peace* would come to the sinner's soul. And this *grace*, if it comes at all, must come from the source having power and authority to show favor—the self-existent, consequently independent and eter-

5 And from Jesus Christ, *who is the faithful witness and the firstbegotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.* Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

nal Being. *From the seven spirits which are before his throne;*—The definite number *seven* is here most evidently used for an indefinite number, and this is taken in preference to any other number, because it signified perfection among the Israelites. And this signification was doubtless attached to it because it is the number of days from Sabbath to Sabbath perpetually. These *seven spirits*, to the favor of which the church of God is here recommended, and in reference to which the language is somewhat varied in chap. iii. 1, chap. iv. 5, and again in chap. v. 6, must be the all-discerning Spirit of Infinite Wisdom, which sees not only the designs and doings of all moral creatures of every variety of endowment, but also the endlessly varied circumstances of capacity, motive, enlightenment, and privilege, in view of which judgment will pass upon man, with different degrees of scrutinizing severity, for all his conduct and conversation in this probationary life.

Verse 5 *And from Jesus Christ*,—The apostle would have us understand that the above *grace and peace* must come to man through the merciful provision made by Jesus Christ, who while he is seated upon the throne of judgment in the church of God—as described in chap. iv.—is *the faithful witness*, presenting every merit and demerit, without reserve, and without disguise. And he also gives assurance, even by his own resurrection, that man shall have another life. Thus far the language of this sentence is addressed especially to the church of God; but the sentence is not closed until the important truth is stated that this same judge and witness holds the reins of government over man in all his

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

national as well as in his ecclesiastical relations. For he is *the prince of the kings of the earth*. *Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood*,—This exclamation of praise seems to be excited in the apostle's mind by the all-important and excellently glorious position occupied by the Lord Jesus Christ over man in the church and in the world, in connection with his gracious favor toward him, as noticed in the preceding sentence. For the Saviour so *loved* man—the vile sinner—that he *washed* him *from* his *sins*, though there was nothing to be found in all the range of remedies and appliances that could cleanse his polluted soul but *his own* precious *blood*. And this loving Saviour, this gracious purifier, this glorious ruler, has full power and authority to establish kingdoms or governments; and he sets up *kings* or governors, who are bound to rule or govern according to the will of God, aided by the best lights within the limits of their capacities and privileges, or be held responsible for their failures. And the same must also be observed of officers of the church of God as of governments. For it is he, and—as in verse 6—he only could do it.

Verse 6 *And (he) hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father*;—If any thing has hitherto been wanting to establish the fact that Christ reigns and rules over man in all the affairs of life, as well as in all his dispositions of soul, and so far as he will submit to it, takes care of all his temporal, spiritual, and eternal interests, it seems to be here furnished; for which let the church of God glorify his name, and let the governments of the world acknowledge his dominion *for ever*—till time shall end—and for

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

ever—during eternity. Amen. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Verse 7 *Behold, he cometh with clouds*;—The present tense seems to be here employed more especially to express the truth that Christ will come, than to express the time of his coming, to judge the world. *Clouds* here is doubtless a figure, expressive of the innumerable attendants upon him when he shall come in his glory at the last day. That none can evade the universal gathering together to the general judgment, is made doubly sure by the statement that in addition to the fact that *every eye shall see him*, even *they that pierced him* shall be there; and whether with or without their own consent, shall see his glory. If the Lord Jesus Christ had not been man's supreme ruler in all ages, and in all states of ignorance and cultivation in the past, as he shall be in the future—according to the teachings of the preceding part of this chapter—how shall he become the universal judge of *all kindreds of the earth*? for *all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*

Verse 8 *I am Alpha and Omega*,—The great I AM condescends to apply a figure here to himself, as one of the sacred names or appellations, *Alpha and Omega*, to give the mind of man a footing on which to rest, that he may contemplate one idea of the Divine nature—his eternity. And by reference to verse 17 we may see that substantially

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

the same figure—the *first and the last*—is applied to Jesus Christ. This view, on this place, may be correct; and if so, it proves the divinity of Jesus Christ; but if it is not, the name *Lord*, in this verse, applies to Jesus Christ, whose excellent glory, great dignity, and divine compassion, constitute the burden of the preceding verses. Then, according to this verse, he is the eternal, omnipotent God.

Verse 9 *I John, who also am your brother*,—St. John here resumes the address which he commenced in verse 4, and reminds those to whom he writes that he is their *brother*, though he is commissioned to instruct and warn them. And more, that his promotion as an officer in the church of God, does not exempt him from *tribulation* similar to, or identical with, such as they suffer; and that he is as much bound to endure patiently the cross of Christ as the most obscure member of Christ's body. For *I am not only your brother*, but also *your companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ*. Yea, *I was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ*. The apostle may mean that because he bore *testimony for Jesus Christ* the spirit of persecution had exiled him, or that he was honored by being selected as the chosen instrument to reveal God's word to all coming generations, by writing (as it were) in advance the history of the Church and of the world to the end of time. The Spirit of prophecy sees fit, to be sure, to clothe this history—if that which has not already occurred can be called history—in figurative language, but it is not thereby the less true, though we may not in every instance clearly under-

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

stand and properly apply these figures. The ideas of persecution for bearing *testimony* to the truth, and that of being an honored instrument in its revealment, are, in all probability, both taught here.

Verse 10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*,—By being *in the Spirit*, the apostle seems to mean that *the Spirit* of plenary inspiration was upon him. Is there not more than a bare probability that, by this *voice* being *behind* him, the apostle would have us understand that he stood, as he had always been accustomed to do, in a position to study and learn what had already occurred, and that he had never presumed to turn himself about and look into futurity? May not the magnitude of this *voice* indicate the vast distance of time from whence the intelligence comes? *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet.*

Verse 11 *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*:—May we not regard these names of the Divine Being—applied to him here in preference to any other, by this *great voice*—as corroborating the idea just noted, of a knowledge of the past and future being alike present with him? For after receiving the command to *write what he sees*, and communicate it *unto the churches*, the apostle *turns himself about* (see verse 12) *to see the voice that spake with him*. And by reference to verse 19, we find that he saw—for he is commanded to write *that which is to come*. By comparing the last chapter of this prophecy with the

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

first chapter, we may see that the entire prophecy is dedicated, or at least addressed, to the seven churches in Asia; and more especially are the seven separate addresses, comprising the second and third chapters, directed to these individual churches, adapted to suit, and addressed to the peculiar condition and wants of each of these churches; but neither the whole prophecy nor these addresses are designed for the exclusive use and benefit of these seven churches; but it is adapted to, addressed to, and reveals the condition of, the church and the world, as a general prophecy, adapted to all ages, and to all people.

Verse 12 *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me.*—See the note on verse 10. I resigned myself to the Spirit that was upon me, and devoted myself to the work to which I was called. *And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;*—It is only necessary to refer to verse 20 to see that the *seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches.* This definite number of *churches in Asia* certainly represents all the church of God for all time to come, as noted on verse 4, and again on verse 11; for the apostle's vision of the church, with all its corruptions and sufferings, its revivals and triumphs, is limited only by the boundaries of time.

Verse 13 *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man,*—The idea so clearly and forcibly taught here by Christ being in the midst of the seven churches; that his all-pervading presence is in every place, to take notice of every thing, and to afford consolation and relief in every emergency, is a most consoling thought to the truly pious soul, and to the church generally. The

14 His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

doctrine, or, rather, the fact, of the real humanity of Jesus Christ; that he was actually born of a woman, and lived in the enjoyment of all the capacities and powers of human nature; and that he died a violent, but voluntary death; and that even death did not dissolve the mysterious union between the divine and human natures; but that immortal humanity and eternal divinity constitute the glorious Person whom the apostle here undertakes to describe. That this Person, we say, possessed real humanity, is a doctrine, or fact, so clearly taught in the word of God, and so corroborated by history, that it is unnecessary to introduce an argument here to prove it. Divine condescension! that he who, according to chap. iv. of this book, is seated upon a throne of judgment over his church, should deign to serve as the great High-priest of his people. For he was *clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle*.—The flowing priestly robe, with a girdle by which it is secured when hoisted, so as not to discommode the wearer in the service at the altar.

Verse 14 *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire*;—This perfect whiteness is strongly emblematical of perfect purity, and of more than sage wisdom. And the flaming eye is a very strong figure to represent perfect penetration, as if every thing was perfectly transparent before it.

Verse 15 *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters*.—This refining of brass was certainly a great art with the ancients; and this metal was perhaps more highly appreci-

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.

ated by them for its perfect fineness and great strength than any other; consequently, it well represents the strength of Christ's authority, and the purity of his reign, nationally and ecclesiastically. *The sound of many waters*, or the voice of multitudes of people, which infallibly prevails against all human opposition, is indicative of the prevailing force of truth and righteousness, when the providence of God shall cause their *voice* to be heard in the church and in the world; when error—antichrist—is cast out and destroyed, and Satan bound.

Verse 16 *And he had in his right hand seven stars*:—The *right hand*—in the language of this book—takes hold of, and is *laid upon*, the church of God, and upon chosen ones among his people, and indicates the divine favor. These seven ministers are certainly those presiding over *the churches in Asia*; but without doubt they represent all the officers in the church of God—the ministers of religion—for all time to come. *And out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword*:—The two edges of this sword well represent the important truth that all the correct knowledge of pure religion that man ever had, or will have, is received from Christ, as well before his incarnation as after his resurrection. *The sword of his mouth*—his divine teaching, the invincible and irresistible power of truth—is the means by which his power, and purity—as noted on verse 15—shall ultimately prevail and triumph against error and corruption; when *Babylon and Satan, the beast and the false prophet, death and the grave*, and the finally impenitent, *who are not found written in the book of life*, are destroyed, and cast into the lake of fire. *And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his*

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

strength.—*His countenance*—the uncovered front of the Son of man, looking as it does to the future of his church, sheds such a flood of light upon the unfolding principles of truth and righteousness, as is well represented by the *sun shining in his strength*; and his gloriously beaming countenance well represents the excellent glory of Jesus Christ, in the *new heaven and new earth*, in the *eternal city*, of which *God and the Lamb* shall be the *temple and the light*.

Verse 17 *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.*—So overwhelming was the sight of the eternal Lord, our Righteousness, so gloriously revealed to the apostle, that poor humanity gave way, and it became necessary that the almighty *right hand* of favor should be laid upon it to sustain it. *And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:*

Verse 18 *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*—Dismiss this fear at once! Thy body is sustained by my right hand; let thy mind also be sustained by the infallible promise of him who, though eternal in his divine nature, and unapproachable in that sacred character by vile humanity, yet, as he has also the nature of man, that he might, in his own person, make the conflict with man's mortal foe, and so by death bring life and immortality to light. Trust him, confide in him. In this conflict he conquered *death and the grave*; and thus gave unto man an infallible pledge, or assurance, that he shall have life and immortality after *death*. And here, in this infinitely important

19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter ;

20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches : and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

interest, let the mind of man rest perfectly secure, for it is impossible for any power to wrest these *keys* from the almighty hand.

Verse 19 *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter ;*—St. John is now commanded, and of course enabled, to *write*, not only *the things which are*, but also all things which he has now seen, and shall see in this glorious vision, including *the things*—without limitation or restriction—*which shall be hereafter* ; not in detail, certainly, but wonderfully condensed, and expressed by appropriate figures ; not thereby, however, the less forcible or true.

Verse 20 *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks.*—Though the apostle says this *mystery* is *the seven stars, and the seven golden candlesticks*, representing these *churches* and ministers, yet, as these represent the church and ministry universally throughout all ages, *the mystery* seems to be the dark and mysterious future of the church and ministry.

CHAPTER II.

What is commanded to be written to the angels, that is, the ministers of the churches of 1 Ephesus, 8 Smyrna, 12 Pergamos, 18 Thyatira ; and what is commended or found wanting in them.

UNTO the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

NOTES.—CHAPTER II.

Verse 1 *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write;—* This charge, which comes to the church through its angel or minister, the apostle would have the church at Ephesus—as well as all Christians of the same class—understand comes not only from the highest authority among the officers or ministers of the church, but from him that holds these ministers *in his right hand*, and *who walketh in the midst of the membership of the churches, the seven golden candlesticks*, controlling in person, by the divine Spirit which proceeds from the Father and the Son, each individual member.

Verse 2 *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil:—*The difference here between *works and labour*—if it is not a repetition of the same idea in different words—seems to be, that *works* apply more especially to deeds of charity, and to the general course of life among men; while *labour* applies to efforts to accomplish good in the church and in the world, by promoting their spiritual interests. And to succeed in this requires *patience*, as well as *labour*; though it is exceedingly hard to bear patiently with *evil-doers*, especially when we ourselves have taught them better things. *And thy labours* have been applied, not only to regulating the conduct of men, but to detecting and correcting errors in faith also. *And thou hast* been successful at least in detecting imposture

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

and impostors; for *thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.*

Verse 3 *And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*—And all these *works* of charity, this *labour* of love, and *patience* of hope, in the midst of the endurance of the conduct and conversation of evil-doers, has been for the honor and glory of the blessed name of Jesus Christ. And in all this *thou hast not faltered, thou hast not fainted.*—Inspiration has here in verses 2 and 3 afforded this church all the encouragement possible by all the commendation its members deserved, except one item, found in verse 6, after which they should have patiently heard the voice of correction for an error.

Verse 4 *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*—This verse, in connection with preceding ones, proves that Christians, and even Christian ministers, may decline in spirituality, in the enjoyment of divine love, even in the midst of their labours in the cause of God.

Verse 5 *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen,*—This charge to the backslidden to *remember from whence they have fallen*, has immediately annexed the means by which they may be restored, and also the consequence which will inevitably and *quickly* follow if these means are neglected. *Repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except*

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

thou repent.—For how can man expect to be blessed with the enjoyment of church privileges and abuse them with impunity?

Verse 6 *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*—It is the opinion of the learned Dr. Croly that these *Nicolaitans* were the Gnostics, who here seem to have added personal licentiousness to their mysticism, or doctrines, noticed in verse 15.

Verse 7 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches;*—Ears are given to man to be used, and especially to be used in attentively hearing and giving heed to the commands and to all the teachings of the *revelation* of God's will concerning him. And this form of expression, *What the Spirit saith unto the churches*, seems quite clearly and very emphatically to enforce the idea that each individual *church*, or congregation, may take lessons from what is said to all the rest, as well as from what is addressed to its own members, as peculiarly applicable to their spiritual state. To *hold the seven stars in the right hand* of favor, and *actively walk in the midst of the golden candlesticks*, as in verse 1, are ideas which very clearly have their corresponding idea here in the activity and energy required that we may *overcome* and *eat of the tree of life*; of which we shall learn more in chap. xxii. It may also be easily seen throughout this address to Ephesus that active, energetic *labour* is the leading idea; and its reward, the fruit of the *tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God*. The charge of St. John in verse 5 of this address, to *remem-*

ber their fall, and repent, and do the first works, in connection with the warning that, if they do not, *I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick, or church, out of his place*, has a very strikingly corresponding charge and warning from St. Paul, who, in Acts xx., after having called the elders of the church at Ephesus together, charges them in verse 28, *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*; and also solemnly warns them in verses 29 and 30, saying, *For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.* These warnings are selected and cited here, not because there are not many others equally forcible on the same subject, but because these are addressed to *the church at Ephesus*. These things occurred, these predictions were fulfilled, when the temptation to the exercise of temporal power, and the enjoyment of wealth, with its luxuries and influence, was presented to the officers of the church under Constantine, when Christianity became the established religion by imperial authority, after that the pagan government of Rome came to its end by the establishment of a Christian prince upon the imperial throne. Previous to this, however, during the first three centuries, there had been periods in which the fierceness of persecution having considerably abated, the crucible of fiery trials having somewhat cooled down, an alloy had, to some extent, mixed with the pure metal; and the primitive, apostolic purity of Christian principles had been somewhat corrupted, but now, when imperial and ecclesiastical authority and power are consolidated, thus turning the flood-gates of ambition loose upon the church—with the means of indulging it—a general and fearful decline commences, which con-

8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan.

10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: Behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye

tinues and increases for more than twelve hundred years. And with this first sad example upon record in Christian history, it is truly astonishing that the Christian church, and the Christianized world, should not always have been zealously alive to the awful danger of the union of church and state.

Verse 8 *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write;—Smyrna*, according to the ancient writers, was, in the days of St. John, the second city in *Asia*, *Ephesus* occupying the first rank; and the church here is addressed second in order by the apostle. As Polycarp—one of St. John's disciples—was early and long bishop of this church, he quite probably was the bishop here at this time. *These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;—The first and the last*, consequently the ever-living, which, mysterious and even paradoxical as it may seem, *was dead*, but *is alive* again.

Verse 9 *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*—*Thou art rich* in faith and in the inheritance of the blessing and favor of God. *Tribulation*—severe affliction, perhaps arising from persecution by these *blaspheming Jews*, who belong to, and do the work of, *Satan*.

Verse 10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye*

may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

may be tried;—These believers are exhorted to *fear* nothing, though they suffer much. And they are informed that *the devil*, perhaps by the hand of these *blaspheming*, persecuting *Jews*, who believe not the Son—who St. John, in his first general epistle says, “is the true God, and eternal life”—*shall* have power to cast some of them *into prison*. And *ye shall have tribulation ten days*.—*Ten*—the first round number in numerals—may be used to represent an indefinite number of prophetic *days*, or years; but it more probably applies particularly to the ten years of general massacre under Diocletian and his successors, immediately preceding the fall and destruction of the pagan authority and power in the Roman empire, by the establishment of Christianity by Constantine the Great, without, however, discarding its general application to the pagan persecutions of Christianity, for the first three centuries. And that these *tribulations* and persecutions are to be unto death, is placed beyond the possibility of a doubt, by the exhortation and promise which follow: *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life*.

Verse 11 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*;—For an idea of generalizing each and every one of the addresses to all the churches by this exhortation, see the note on this sentence in the address to the church at *Ephesus*, verse 7. *The first and the last*—or ever-living one of verse 8, with the corresponding idea of the all-knowing one of verse 9, in connection with the prophecies and infallible promises of verses 10 and 11, together

12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

with the victory over death, and *life* after death, in verse 8; and the victor's *crown of life*, in verse 10; with the following assurance here: *He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death*, but have eternal life, are corresponding ideas which make the chain complete in this address, and which we maintain is traceable in all the rest. The believer knows that this assurance of eternal security from the power of the second death is true and faithful, because it is given by him *who was dead and is alive for evermore*.

Verse 12 *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges*;—By consulting verse 16 we may learn that one of the *edges* of this *sharp sword* is the truth of Christianity, as taught by its divine author, as it stands in opposition to the errors of paganism; and by proper attention to the chain of corresponding ideas, quite traceable in this address, the other seems to be purity of character and life, under the power of divine truth, as this purity stands opposed to the corruptions of idolatrous worship.

Verse 13 *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is*:—To stand firm, and *hold fast* to Christian principles, and worship in their truth and purity, in the midst of such surroundings as pagan errors and corruptions, (the lying wonders of Satan,) established by imperial authority, exercised in persecution even unto death, is truly meritorious, commendable. And, indeed, thou shalt

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

have commendation, for *thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*

Verse 14 *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam,—*The apostle not only charges that some of the members of the church in Pergamos had fallen into Balaam's error, but also tells them in what that sin consisted—in teaching God's people—the children of Israel—to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. And truly the danger was imminent that, with their surroundings, some of their people would be inclined to incorporate heathen superstitions and practices with Christian principles and worship.

Verse 15 *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*—It is the opinion of many of the learned, that *the doctrine of the Nicolaitans* was identical with the mysticisms of the Gnostics; and their deeds—as in verse 6—with that of the error taught by Balaam, in verse 14; for pagan idolatry and superstition, though varying somewhat in its forms, quite naturally leads to the same, or to similar results, practically.

Verse 16 *Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*—*The sword of my mouth*—the word of God—the holy

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*.

truths taught by Jesus Christ, as they here stand opposed to the errors of paganism, and the rising errors of antichrist. Neither church nor state may expect to indulge ecclesiastical impurity, or national corruption, for a length of time, without the chastening rod of Him who rules over all.

Verse 17 *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*—To overcome and maintain soundness of faith, and purity of heart, when exposed, as these Christians were, to the influences of idolatry, the spirit and power of persecution, and every evil work, secures the infallible promise, as in this sure word of prophecy; that the faithful shall, in addition to the full enjoyment of the paradise of God in all other respects, *eat of the hidden manna*, that cannot be even seen by saints, who have made their way safely home, through ordinary trials; and shall be divinely honored with a signet, or medal, so precious, so peculiar, that none but the Almighty Giver and the heaven-favored receiver can understand the precious *name* inscribed. For, it may be remarked, that Christ gives promise not only of the *white stone*—a token of acquittal—but also *upon the stone a new and divinely precious name written*. The sword of truth and purity, in verses 12 and 16, as it stands opposed to *Satan*, the father of lies, and the foul spirit of persecution in verse 13, and to false gods, or idols, and the filthy corruptions of their worship in verse 14; and the mysticisms to evade truth, in verse 15; with the ultimate success of the faithful, in *overcoming* these errors and corruptions,

18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write ; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass ;

by a faithful adherence to truth and purity—as in verse 17—certainly do constitute a most beautiful chain of corresponding ideas. And still farther, may not the *eating of the hidden manna* be the learning and understanding of truth and its author, in the future life, to a degree of perfection unattainable in this dark world? And may not the *white stone and new name* be emblematic of a degree of purity quite inconceivable until mortality shall be swallowed up of life? And may not these ideas be regarded as the gloriously bright end of the above chain?

Verse 18 *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write ; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass ;—* The *flaming eye* of penetrating wisdom, and the *brazen foot* of irresistible power, are figures which may serve as finger-boards to point the mind, even in this present state, to some contemplations of what omniscience and omnipotence really mean. And may not the *eye* of omniscient wisdom indicate the jealous, ever-watchful care and vigilance with which *the Son of God* looks into and guards the purity of his church and people? And as the divine hand, almighty to deliver, and unchangeably faithful to the established covenant, the power and faithfulness of which are prayed for by David in Psalm cxliv. 7, 8—"Send thine hand from above ; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, (multitudes of people,) from the hand of strange children, (unbelieving and unfaithful Gentiles ;) whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood"—so here may not the divinely pure and firmly established *foot* of omnipotent power symbolically represent the supreme authority by

19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first.

20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

which he controls the governments of the world? For the power and authority promised in verses 26 and 27 cannot be delegated by one who does not possess them. It must be distinctly understood here, that the supreme authority and power, secular and spiritual, possessed and wielded over the interests of man by ONE Jesus Christ, is not the union of church and state, for when man submits to him, his wisdom selects and sets up men adapted to each important charge.

Verse 19 *I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works*;—Works of mercy and charity seem here to be distinguished from *patient* perseverance in the *works and service* of the true *faith* in Jesus Christ, as it here stands opposed to idolatry. And this seems the more evident by reference to the use of this word in verse 26: *he that overcometh, and keepeth MY works unto the end. And the last to be more than the first.*—The latter are more difficult, as well as more important, more essential works, than the former.

Verse 20 *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel*,—Whether this is the real name of this woman, or a name applied to her by the apostle, as peculiarly applicable to her, in view of the character of the ancient Jezebel, allusion is doubtless here had to the history of Ahab and Jezebel, as given in 2 Kings ix. and x. Dr. A. Clarke, in his comment on this place, tells us that many excellent MSS., and almost all the ancient versions, read, *thy wife Jezebel*, which asserts

21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

that this bad woman was the wife of the bishop of the church. If this is the correct reading here, the charge against the bishop of this church is truly a grievous one; for notwithstanding pure Christianity is just now being established in the midst of the errors and corruptions of paganism, for a Christian pastor to tolerate such teachings by any of his members, and especially by his wife, is most reprehensible; for the influence of such teachings and practices, or even matrimonial alliances with idolaters, is most dangerous to pure religion, as is clearly seen in the case of Solomon, even if the history of the Christian church had not furnished another single example.

Verse 21 *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.*—That Jezebel, bad as she was, should have had *space given her to repent*, is in perfect accordance with the true spirit of Christianity, the benevolent mission of which is to convert heathens. Though the parties charged in this address may have been literally guilty of the sin of *fornication*, it seems here to have reference especially to the effort made in the verse above, to incorporate idolatrous teachings and practices with Christian principles; thus corrupting and perverting pure religion. The reader may see, by examining the history of Jezebel referred to above, that the allusion to it is kept up here.

Verse 22 *Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*—As the *deeds* of the vile adulterer and the filthy adulteress produce a loathsome disease, great suffering, and even death, so an alliance between

23 And I will kill her children with death ; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Christianity and paganism produces rottenness that is as a stench in the nostrils of Him that watches with a jealous eye over the purity and soundness of his church in its doctrines and the lives of its members. In this and the following verse the allusion is still kept up to the history of Ahab, and Jezebel, and their children. And may not the *great tribulation* in this verse—the judgments inflicted upon the introduction of the corrupting doctrines and practices of idolatry into the Christian church—have reference to the decline and fall of paganism in the Roman empire, about the close of the third century, and the establishment of Christianity under the reign of Constantine the Great ; but more especially to the judgments of God upon the Roman church, for her superstitions, idolatry, corruptions, and tyranny, and to the final destruction of BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH ?

Verse 23 *And I will kill her children with death ;*—As natural *death* may be expected early to carry off the child whose parents are diseased by excessive indulgence in illicit sexual intercourse, so the Christian church, or any branch or congregation of it, thus corrupted by idolatry, cannot prosper, but must, sooner or later, if it repent not, become extinct. And the Head of the church himself here says emphatically, that an example thus made of an incorrigibly perverse and idolatrous people professing Christianity, shall be profitable to the whole church, without restriction or limitation, either as to time or place ; and that every one shall have a *reward* according to his *works*, in view of the

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

25 But that which ye have *already*, hold fast till I come.

lights and privileges afforded. *And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

Verse 24 *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.*—The doctrines, alliances, and practices above noticed in this address, are here (in the language of inspiration) said to be the deepest laid schemes of *Satan* against Christianity. And all the *Thyatira* Christians, and all others who anywhere or at any time are or shall be similarly circumstanced, and who have stood, and shall stand, firm against these influences, have the infallible promise that *no other burden* will be *put upon them*.

Verse 25 *But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come.*—But, notwithstanding the very encouraging promise of the above verse, it is deemed proper to exhort them to still stand firm, and *hold fast* until the coming of their Lord, when they shall be released from their present perilous position, and graciously carried beyond the influence and power of idolatry, antichrist, and Satan. And while the case of Solomon remains upon the sacred records, and so many ten thousands of the Israel of God, who fell into idolatry, even while favored with the influential presence and inspired teachings of Moses—the servant and prophet of God—as well as multitudes of others, in all ages and climes, we cannot but recognize the vast importance of this standing caution to the church and the world for all time to come.

26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations :

27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers : even as I received of my Father.

Verse 26 *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations :—* The language of this verse is well calculated to add to the overwhelming impression already made by this address of the unspeakable importance of maintaining uncorrupted and undefiled the holy truths and pure worship of the only wise God our Saviour, all through life, and all through time ; for the finally faithful and victorious over error and its concomitants have the infallible promise that they shall ultimately—when antichrist shall have met with his doom—have authority and power, not only over the church, but that God will also place them over the nations. Is not the promise of dominion, in the language of prophecy contained in verses 26 and 27, very clear and full, that after the destruction of *Babylon*—as noted on verse 22—believers who are faithful shall be placed in charge of the nations as well as of the church ?

Verse 27 *And he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers :—* May we not learn from this and the preceding verse, with the context, that the errors of antichrist are more difficult to overcome and destroy than paganism ? But Christ will purify his church first, and then must the kingdoms of the world yield to his pure and almighty reign ; for the idolatrous nations of the world that persist in refusing to yield to the generous efforts of God's faithful church and people, that they too may become Christians, and govern their hearts and lives accordingly, shall by superior power be compelled to yield to be governed as nations by Christian people,

28 And I will give him the morning star.

29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

that idolatrous rulers may not stand in the way of the people against the truth. And so shall error be crushed out and driven from the face of the earth; for Jesus Christ has received authority and power from the Father, over the nations, as well as over the church. This shall be done, says Christ, *even as I received of my Father*.—The unbelieving shall learn obedience to the faithful, as they learn obedience to Christ, who by his great sufferings learned obedience to the Father.

Verse 28 *And I will give him the morning star*.—Unto the victorious and faithful, so favorably noticed in verse 24, and onward, *I will give* the light of knowledge, the light of divine favor, the light of life—spiritual life; and, that he or they may want nothing in the overwhelmingly important and fearfully responsible ecclesiastical and national charges committed to his care and fidelity, *I will give him the morning star*.—And if he shall have Christ—the life of the church, the light of the world, and the *star* of hope to all—it shall be well; notwithstanding the unspeakable importance, the crushing weight of his responsibilities, all shall be well.

Verse 29 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*.—And now let the church universally, and the nations, all listen attentively and take heed to this sure word of prophecy, for in due time the Lord Christ will bring these things to pass. Now, to sum up the chain of thought, the divinely sacred teachings of this long and vastly important address to the *church in Thyatira*: We have in verse 18 *the flaming*, all-penetrating eye of omniscient wisdom looking into the most

secret and hidden things, into all things, even into *the depths of Satan*; and the *brazen foot* of omnipotent and perfectly pure power, able to accomplish every herculean work which the divine pleasure wills. And in verse 19 the works of mercy and charity, and the *faithful* and *patient service*, the truly divine *work* of the pure worship of the only wise God our Saviour; notwithstanding all the fearfully dangerous influences of idolatry and corruption described in verses 20-23 inclusive, even against *the depths of Satan*, as these really are. And then the gracious promises, the divine assurances, given to the victorious, the finally faithful, in *keeping the works*, the pure worship of the true God, in this fearful conflict with paganism, antichrist, and Satan; as these promises and assurances stand recorded in verses 24-28. And may we not regard this last promise, given in verse 28, as all things to the believer—the sum total of all blessedness in this life? *And I will give him the morning star.*

CHAPTER III.

1 *The angel of the church of Sardis is reprov'd. 3 Exhort'd to repent, and threatened if he do not repent. 7 The angel of the church of Philadelphia 10 is approv'd for his diligence and patience. 14 The angel of Laodicea is rebuk'd for being neither hot nor cold, 19 and admonish'd to be more zealous. 20 Christ standeth at the door and knocketh.*

AND unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and

NOTES.—CHAPTER III.

Verse 1 *And unto the angel of the church in Sardis*

the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars;—He that hath the seven Spirits of God, discerning, that he may judge every soul according to that which he hath received in the way of talents or capacity, and heard, or had the privilege of hearing, to enlighten his mind and teach him the path of religious duty, and how to walk therein, as in verse 3. And he also hath the seven stars, and furnishes his church and people with a living ministry; and his all-discerning eye sees and knows whether they make faithful improvement upon all these privileges and blessings, or neglect them; whether they are living branches of the living vine, or dead and liable to be cut off. For, says he, I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Verse 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die:—Be watchful, and bestir thyself, for this backslidden state is fearfully dangerous; for thou canst not live thus, but must revive or die. And in fact, the least difficult, as well as the most happy way, of prosecuting the Christian course, is to follow the Lord fully, as did Caleb and Joshua, that thy works may be accounted perfect before God, in Christ; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Verse 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.—For backsliders to re-

4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

member what they have been, and what they have known, as well as what they *have received and heard*, in the way of truth and righteousness, is of the greatest importance; and then to *hold fast* to their almost lost estate, *and repent*, there is great and encouraging hope; otherwise, the judgment threatened is sudden and unexpected destruction; for, *If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*

Verse 4 *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments*;—To preserve the garment of righteousness and salvation undefiled, in the midst of an apostate and dead society, is truly praiseworthy, not to say meritorious. And to all such says Jesus Christ, *They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.*

Verse 5 *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment*;—To overcome against such drifting tides and chilling influences, secures the promise—infallible—of *white raiment*, and a record and recognition that shall not only be untarnished and without a blot, but also an assurance of the most distinguished honor and glory of being recognized among the sainted pure, before the *Father and his holy angels*. For, says Christ, *I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

Verse 6 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit*

saith unto the churches.—Let the Christian ear be attentive and take warning at the threatenings against impurity and unfaithfulness, and receive encouragement from the gracious promises of Him who shall judge every man according to his works. In reviewing this address, we shall see that the idea of seven, or the perfect, complete, or full number of Spirits representing the infinity or perfection of the adaptation of God's blessings upon, and his judgments against, the faithful and unfaithful, in view of the infinitely varied capacities, circumstances, opportunities, privileges, temptations, and trials, of all people, in all ages, is strongly corroborated by its intimate association here with the *seven stars*, messengers, or ministers, who preside over and represent the *seven churches in Asia*, which, in their turn, represent all the church of God, for all time to come; or in other words, the inspired apostle, in addressing and instructing these churches, addresses and instructs all Christians in all ages. And farther, in this same chain of thought, the apostle in verse 3 has this language: *Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.* Now, is it not perfectly clear, that if these people do not *hold fast and repent*, they will be held responsible, as they would not be had they not *received and heard*? And now take all this in connection with what is said of these *seven Spirits* in chap. v. 6: *And behold a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven EYES, which are the seven Spirits of God SENT FORTH INTO ALL THE EARTH.* Once more, take the language of chap. iv. 5: *And out of the throne* (set over the church and people of God especially, and also over all people in this world of probation or trial) *proceeded lightnings* (to illuminate) *and thunderings* (to warn) *and voices* (to teach:) *and there were SEVEN LAMPS OF FIRE BURNING BEFORE THE THRONE, WHICH ARE THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD.*

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

8 I know thy works: Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

The worthiness and purity of the faithful, under peculiar trials, as in verses 4 and 5, are contrasted ideas with the danger of unfaithfulness in the improvement of peculiar privileges and favors, as in verses 1, 2, and 3.

Verse 7 *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David,—Holiness and truth* are emphatically and essentially the inhabitants of the throne of Jesus Christ, which he has set up and established over his people—described in the next chapter. And as *David*—chosen, anointed, and established by God's providence king over his people—had the power of *opening* the gates, or *doors*, of his kingdom to every individual of the idolatrous nations about him who would renounce paganism, and adopt in its stead the worship of the God of Israel, and to keep his kingdom *closed* against all false religion; and as in his successful, peaceful, and glorious reign, he was the prototype, so Jesus Christ, the great antitype, has absolute power to *close* his kingdom of *holiness and truth* against all impurity and falsehood; against all error, infidelity, and corruption, which *no man* nor any other power can *open*; and to *open the door of truth and purity* to all true and faithful believers, *and no man can shut it*; for *he openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.*

Verse 8 *I know thy works*:—Absolutely and perfectly, without a limiting word or idea. A knowledge too wonder-

9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

ful—especially the motives and principles by which they are prompted—for any but the Infinite Mind. *Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it:*—This *holy*, devoted people, who believe the truth of God as it is in Christ, have the assurance that a permanently *open door is before them*; and they, and all other faithful Christians—though they may feel that their *strength* is small—who, nevertheless, *have kept God's word*, and believed, *and denied not* that Jesus is the Christ, shall know that they are *beloved*; *för*, says Christ, *thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

Verse 9 *Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie;*—And the purpose of God respecting the *Jews* being fixed and determined, and because it is not being a literal descendant of Abraham or of Judah that constitutes an heir of the promise, but because it is by the faith of Abraham that these believing souls in *Philadelphia*, and all true believers in Christ, are the true children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise which God made to him and his seed, the announcement is made, in very emphatic and positive terms, that the perverse, unbelieving, and wicked *Jews* shall also ultimately *know*, and in the deepest humiliation confess, that Christians, because they are believers in Christ, are *beloved of God*; and gladly confess, too, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. For, says Christ: *Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee*—as well as them. Is not this a very clear prediction that the *Jews* shall be converted to Christianity?

10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is new Jerusalem*, which cometh down

Verse 10 *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*—While the believing soul unwaveringly holds the truth in righteousness, it is not presumption to expect to be kept secure—certainly not from persecution and affliction, of which all are partakers who live godly in Christ Jesus, but *from temptation* to yield up this precious faith, which is of the operation of God. And without this pure principle firmly established in the believing soul, *all that dwell upon the earth* are exposed to a fearful and eternal shipwreck upon the storm-beaten coast of error and corruption.

Verse 11 *Behold, I come quickly:*—In connection with faith in Christ as the true Messiah, there is the promise of his *coming* again; and this faith includes and embraces that promise. And this word *quickly*, connected with it, may have reference rather to the certainty that he will *come* than to the time of his coming. And notwithstanding thy faith in Christ is now so unyielding and unwavering, take the exhortation: *Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*—For God will preserve a faithful people, as he has always done; and be assured, if this *crown* fall from thy head, some other *man* will wear it.

Verse 12 *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the*

out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him my new name.*

temple of my God, and he shall go no more out:—To him that *overcometh by holding fast* and continuing faithful unto the end, the promise is sure, infallible, that he shall be part and parcel of that living, glorious temple of the living God—the new Jerusalem of which God and the Lamb shall be the light, and from whence *he shall go no more out.* The material for the building of this transcendently glorious temple—the Eternal City—is being collected, and being borne along down the stream of time; and when time shall end, it shall be collected together into an habitation of God, where its record shall be glorious as well as eternal—THE HOLY NAME OF THE ETERNAL GOD, AND OF HIS CHRIST. For, says Christ, *I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven* (or out of the church) *from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*—We have some very obvious allusions here to the ancient Jewish church. The priest having written on his forehead, *Holiness to the Lord*; and in chap. i. 6, St. John says, *Christ hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.* And the high-priest, having the names of the twelve tribes engraven on his breastplate, these tribes constituted the church, or *city of God*, in the wilderness and in Palestine; and the twelve apostles in the new, or Christian dispensation, take the place of the twelve patriarchs, and are the foundation on which the church of God is built, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. And now a most beautiful transfer is here made of all this to the God-built *city* described in chap. xxi., in which even the pen of inspiration labors so exceedingly to give some idea of the glory of the redeemed, the sainted pure, who

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

come down out of heaven, or out of the church, in all ages, from God, by his providence and grace. And this royal priesthood, this holy nation, this peculiar people, are builded into a holy temple in the Lord, in the eternal future, happy world above, as well as in the millennial age.

Verse 13 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*—An attentive ear to the gracious promises made to true faith, purity, and patient perseverance, is very important to afford encouragement. To observe diligently, and to mark properly, the association of ideas in any important composition, is the best method of seeing the author's meaning; and most particularly in the use of the figures of prophetic language is it one of the very best means of arriving at the meaning of a difficult or obscure passage; and still more especially, if possible, where so much symmetry and harmony exists as seems to be studiously observed in these addresses; and, in fact, in and throughout this entire book. The prominent and leading ideas in the address to the angel of the church in Philadelphia are *truth* and *purity*. In verse 7 we read, *These things saith he that is holy, he that is true.* And he only introduces believers into the knowledge of this *truth*, and into this state of *purity*, for *he* only hath the *key of David*; *he openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.* To their good works Christ set an open door; perhaps to their successors—the generations following. So in verse 8, *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.* The character of the unbelieving *Jews* in verse 9 stands in contrast, not only with these faithful ones in Philadelphia, but also in contrast with those among themselves and their successors who shall be-

14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

lieve. Nothing short of true faith and pure fidelity could have secured the promise and its fulfillment through so many centuries as we read it in verse 10: *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation.* To secure the promise and its fulfillment, which we read in verse 12, true faith and its attendants are indispensable; for the temple of God is pure, and certainly those who shall constitute pillars in the temple of God must be pure. *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, new Jerusalem, and my new name.* So we find the chain here quite complete.

Verse 14 *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*—These teachings are from *the Amen*, who is *Truth and Fidelity*; from *the faithful and true witness*, almost a parallel expression with *the Amen*, who, being also the Judge described in the next chapter, holds to strict account for all that is wrong or erroneous in faith or practice, and gives full credit for all that is *pure and true*. From Him who is also *the beginning of the creation of God*, the prime-moving cause, the author of all things; who, in the beginning of time, created all things; and who, by his power, providence, and grace, carries on in and through his people the works of truth, purity, and righteousness. And all this stands here in contrast with error, false deities, idol gods, and their corrupt worship among pagans. And the reader will the better understand the state or condition of the Laodiceans by re-

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

membering this contrast; for these people are certainly in a strait between truth and error, between Christianity and paganism, between the pure worship of the true God and the corrupt and corrupting service of idols.

Verse 15 *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot*:—The *Laodiceans* are here assured by their *faithful and true witness*—who will also be their final judge—that he *knows their works*, the character of their faith, their state of grace, and at the same time their want of grace, which seems to be the result of their indecision. This is an evil, a great evil; for Christ says, *I would thou wert cold or hot*.

Verse 16 *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth*.—This halting state and disposition of mind may be tolerated for a time in a pagan who is just hearing and learning the truths of Christianity, but after there is sufficient time and opportunity to arrive at a knowledge of the truth, then to hesitate is exceedingly dangerous; but after the power of Christ's holy religion has been realized, to turn again to idolatry is still more wicked. Hence the denunciations, the *woes*, the curses pronounced against *the beast*—the Roman church—after mixing so much error, superstition, and idolatry, with what little they still retain of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. For this corrupting of the truth with a mixture of such fatal error, were the *Laodiceans* cast out as a nauseating potion; and for this shall BABYLON, GREAT BABYLON, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH, be destroyed—so destroyed that *it shall be found no more at all*.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Verse 17 *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing*;—*Laodicea*, being at that time an opulent city, these people were, quite probably, betrayed by what an apostle calls the root of all evil, the *love* of their *money*, into the most fatal of all errors—an effort to accommodate Christianity, which they had at least nominally embraced, to paganism, the prevailing and authorized religion of the empire, to save themselves from persecution, and to secure their estates, their goods, their money, from confiscation. But Christ assures them that this time-serving spirit and course to save their wealth, is keeping them in a kind of *wretchedness, misery, poverty, blindness, and nakedness*, far worse than the loss of all earthly things; therefore,

Verse 18 *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich*;—If a firm and decided stand for truth and purity cost thee all thy money, and even thy safe abode, take it; yea, if it cost thee the fires of persecution and temporal life, take it. Buy the truth at any cost, and sell it not at any price. For unwavering faith and perfect love, when they are tested, shall be as *gold tried in the fire*; an unspotted and pure life as *white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear*;—a manifest allusion to the nudity of images in pagan temples and elsewhere, an insult to decency, and

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

an incentive to libertinism ; and looking steadfastly and constantly to Christ, that thou mayest have light to see thy true interest and real safety ; and see also, as clearly as may be seen by faith, from this dull, dark world, thine immortal reward—an inheritance, *rich* ; a home, bright ; a crown, glorious—all undescribed and indescribable, reserved in heaven for thee.

Verse 19 *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous therefore, and repent.*—The *rebukes* and *chastenings* inflicted upon us, as well as the sufferings of Christ for us, proceed from *love* ; be constrained, *therefore*, by his *love*, to be firm, unwavering, and *zealous*, in his righteous cause, *and repent* of thy lukewarmness.

Verse 20 *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock* :—The *love* of Jesus Christ constrains him, and he approaches even to the very *doors* of the pagan temples ; and while the devotees within are slaying their victims, and feasting upon their sacrifices, and superstitiously pouring out their libations, and filling and emptying their gorgeous cups to Bacchus, and abandoning themselves to all manner of licentiousness, he stands, and while he stands, he knocks. And now, O infatuated humanity ! wilt thou but listen to the *voice* of his gracious words ! *If any man hear my voice*,—Yes, even those abandoned to error and to vice—*if any man* learn to know the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, *and open the door*,—but he must know that if the *door* be *opened* to me, it must be *closed* to these dumb idols, and to all unrighteousness,—*I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with*

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

me.—And O! what a delightful contrast between this feast and the former! Whereas that was gross meats and drinks, conducted in error, by which its votaries were deluded, corrupted, and destroyed; this is truth, true faith, which yields the rich fruits of peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost—the feast of the soul, the love of God, the hope of heaven, and eternal life.

Verse 21 *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,*—Whoever endures unflinchingly these refining fires, sore temptations, and severe trials, and in defiance of error, corruption, and the fierce powers and fiendish rage of pagan and superstitious persecution, maintains the true faith, and keeps his garments unspotted and pure, *will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame* in the fierce and fearful conflict which I had on Calvary, with sin and its consequences, death and destruction, and conquering, vanquished the last foe, and dragged death as a captive even from the tomb, *and am set down with my Father in his throne.* This peaceful reign of righteousness represented here over the church and the nations, in which the faithful and pure shall be associated with Christ, *after the beast and the false prophet shall have been cast into the lake of fire,* corresponds with a very similar sentiment in language, only differing slightly in the manner of its expression, in chap. ii. 26, 27.

Verse 22 *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*—For the general church and every individual member, as well as all who have within their reach the means of obtaining a knowledge of

the truth, to *hear* attentively, and take heed to the teachings of the divine Spirit, is acting the part of true wisdom. To mark attentively the association of ideas here—the *Amen*, the *faithful and true witness*, and *Almighty Creator*, in verse 14, the exhortations and gracious promises and assurances of verses 18, 19, and 20, with the victorious *triumph* over error, sin, and death, the *throne* of judgment, and the success of truth, and the peaceful and pure reign of righteousness, in verse 21, contrasted as they are with unfaithfulness, error, and corruption, in verses 15, 16, and 17, gives to the investigating mind the very best aid in discerning the full scope, the true spirit and meaning, of the whole address.

To the notes which we have made upon the text of the addresses to the churches in Asia, it may be proper and profitable to add something of the history of these cities and churches, which we have been able to collect from the labors of others. "The church at Ephesus is first addressed, as being the place where John chiefly resided; and the city itself was the metropolis of that part of Asia. The angel, or bishop, of this church was most probably *Timothy*, who presided over that church before St. John took up his residence there, and who is supposed to have continued in that office till A. D. 97, and to have been martyred a short time before St. John's return from Patmos." Thus far from Dr. A. Clarke. The following able sketch is from the pen of Dr. Croly: "Ephesus, seated in the richest part of one of the richest regions of the Roman empire, was remarkable for its opulence, its voluptuousness, and its idolatry. The celebrated temple of Diana attracted worshipers from all the realms of paganism. To combat evil in its source, may have been among the motives of that strong interest which St. Paul felt towards this city. He resided in Ephesus two years. It was also a center from which opinions were to be

most extensively propagated; and by his residence 'all they who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.' The history of those periods is imperfect, as might be presumed from the destruction of the Christian records during the persecutions. . . . The church at Ephesus long retained the rank attached to it by the peculiar presence of St. Paul, of Timothy, and of St. John. In the general fall of the Greek empire in Asia, (A.D. 1312,) Ephesus was ruined. Its remnant is now Aiasalic, a village of fifteen cottages, containing but three Christians." Again from Dr. Croly: "Smyrna, now the chief commercial city of the Levant, was considered, in the time of the apostles, the second city of Asia; Ephesus holding the first rank. One of its early bishops was Polycarp, who had been the disciple of St. John. His successors sat in the general councils for a long period. Like Ephesus, it was ruined in the Turkish invasion. Yet its admirable situation for commerce revived it, and it is now large and opulent, containing 140,000 inhabitants, of whom about 20,000 are Greeks, 6,000 Armenians, 5,000 Roman Catholics, and a few Protestants. The apostolic church in Smyrna seems to have been harassed by the insults of the Jews, the original persecutors, who retained their hostility and even their power, long after the fall of their city. Eusebius describes them as actively hostile, even in the time of the Emperor Verus." "Smyrna, now called also Ismar, is the largest and richest city of Asia Minor. It is situated about one hundred and eighty-three miles west by south of Constantinople, on the shore of the *Ægean* Sea. It is supposed to contain about 140,000 inhabitants, of whom there are from 15,000 to 20,000 Greeks, 6,000 Armenians, 5,000 Roman Catholics, 140 Protestants, 11,000 Jews, and 15,000 Turks. It is a beautiful city but often ravaged by the plague, and seldom two years together free from earthquakes. In 1758

the city was nearly desolated by the plague; scarcely a sufficient number of the inhabitants survived to gather in the fruits of the earth. In 1688 there was a terrible earthquake here, which overthrew a great number of houses. In one of the shocks, the rock on which the castle stood opened, swallowed up the castle, and five thousand persons. On these accounts, nothing but the *love of gain*, so natural to man, could induce any person to make it his residence, though in other respects it can boast of many advantages. In this city the Turks have nineteen mosques, the Greeks two churches, the Armenians one, and the Jews eight synagogues; and the English and Dutch factories have each a chaplain. Smyrna is one hundred miles north of the island of Rhodes, long. $27^{\circ} 25' E.$, lat. $38^{\circ} 28' N.$ " This last account of Smyrna is from Dr. A. Clarke. "Pergamos, a town of Mysia, situated on the river Caicus. It was the royal residence of the Attali. It was anciently famous for its library, which contained, according to Plutarch, two hundred thousand volumes. It was here that the Pergamenian skins were invented, from which we derive our word parchment. Pergamos was the birth-place of Galen, and in it P. Scipio died. It is now called Pergamo, and Bergamo, and is situated in long. $27^{\circ} 0' E.$, lat. $39^{\circ} 13' N.$ " "Thyatira, now called Akissat, and Ak-kissar, a city of Natolia, in Asia Minor, seated on the river Hermus, in a plain eighteen miles broad, and is about fifty miles from Pergamos, long. $27^{\circ} 49' E.$, lat. $38^{\circ} 15' N.$ The houses are chiefly built of earth, but the mosques are all of marble. Many remarkable ancient inscriptions have been discovered in this place. Sardis, now called Sardo, and Sart, a town of Asia, in Natolia, about forty miles east from Smyrna. It is seated on the side of Mount Timolus, and was once the capital of the Lydian kings, and here Croesus reigned. It is now a poor, inconsiderable village. Long. $28^{\circ} 5' E.$, lat. $31^{\circ} 51' N.$ "

Dr. Croly says: "Sardis perished in the general decay of Asia Minor, and can be scarcely said to have revived in the modern Sart. A few Christians, prohibited from having a church within the walls, some years ago built one in the adjoining plain. A small village, named Tartar-keny, has grown round it, and about forty persons attend the service."

Of Philadelphia, Dr. Croly says: "Philadelphia had been a flourishing city, and possessed a comparatively pure church. Its Bishop, Melito, a man distinguished in the second century, wrote a treatise on the Apocalypse, which has perished in the general destruction of the early Christian records. The city suffered much from earthquakes, yet was remarkable for the number of its Christian population, even subsequently to the Turkish invasion. This feature has not altogether passed away. The purity of the apostolic doctrine may be degraded, but its form, at least, is retained by the Greeks, who have twenty-five places of regular worship, five of them large churches, with a bishop and twenty clergy. The name is now Alashehr."

Dr. Clarke also says: "Philadelphia, a city of Natolia, seated at the foot of Mount Timolus, by the river Cogamus. It was founded by Attalus Philadelphus, brother of Eumenes, from whom it derived its name. It is now called Alah-sheker, and is about forty miles E. S. E. of Smyrna, long. $28^{\circ} 15'$ E., lat. $38^{\circ} 28'$ N."

Again from Dr. Clarke: "Laodicea, a city of Asia Minor, on the borders of Caria, Phrygia, and Lydia. It was originally called Diosopolis, or the city of Jupiter; and afterwards Rhoas; but obtained the name of Laodicea from Laodice, the wife of Antiochus. It is now called Ladik. It was formerly celebrated for its commerce, and the fine black wool of its sheep. Colosse, or the city of the Colossians, lay between it and Hierapolis. This Hierapolis

was also a town of Phrygia, famous for its hot baths; it is now called Bambukholasi."

The following note on the conclusion of this chapter, and particularly on verse 22, is from Mr. Wesley: *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*—This counsel stands, in three former letters, before the promise—in the four latter, after it; clearly dividing the seven into two parts, the first containing three and the last four letters. The titles given our Lord in the three former letters, peculiarly respect his power after his resurrection and ascension, particularly over his church; those in the four latter, his divine glory and unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit. . . . It should be observed that the overcoming, or victory, (to which alone these peculiar promises are annexed,) is not the ordinary victory obtained by every believer, but a special victory obtained over great and peculiar temptations, by those that are strong in faith."

I will conclude the notes on the addresses to the churches in Asia, with a letter from the Rev. Henry Lindsay, Chaplain to the British Embassy at Constantinople, to a member of the British and Foreign Bible Society, by which Society Mr. Lindsay had been solicited to distribute some copies of the New Testament, in modern Greek, among the Christians in Asia Minor. The following is his communication, dated

"CONSTANTINOPLE, Jan. 10, 1816.

"When I last wrote to you, I was on the point of setting out on a short excursion into Asia Minor. Traveling hastily, as I was constrained to do, from the circumstances of my situation, the information I could procure was necessarily superficial and unsatisfactory. As, however, I distributed the few books of the Society which I was able to carry with me, I think it necessary to give some account of the course I took:

"1. The regular intercourse of England with SMYRNA will enable you to procure as accurate intelligence of its present state as any I can pretend to offer. From the conversations I had with the Greek bishop and his clergy, as well as various well-informed individuals, I am led to suppose that if the population of Smyrna be estimated at 140,000 inhabitants, there are from 15,000 to 20,000 Greeks, 6000 Armenians, 5000 Catholics, 140 Protestants, and 11,000 Jews.

"2. After Smyrna, the first place I visited was EPHEBUS, or rather (as the site is not quite the same) Aiasalick, which consists of about fifteen poor cottages. I found there but three Christians, two brothers who keep a small shop, and a gardener. They are all three Greeks, and their ignorance is lamentable indeed. In that place, which was blessed so long with an apostle's labors, and those of his zealous assistants, are Christians who have not so much as heard of that apostle, or seem only to recognize the name of Paul as one in the calendar of their saints. One of them I found able to read a little, and left with him the New Testament in ancient and modern Greek, which he expressed a strong desire to read, and promised me he would not only study it himself but lend it to his friends in the neighboring villages.

"3. My next object was to see LAODICEA. In the road to this is Guzel-hisar, a large town, with one church and about seven hundred Christians. In conversing with the priests here, I found them so little acquainted with the Bible, or even the New Testament in an entire form, that they had no distinct knowledge of the books it contained, beyond the four Gospels, but mentioned them indiscriminately, with various idle legends and lives of saints. (See the notes on the address to the Laodiceans.) I have sent thither three copies of the modern Greek Testament since my return. About three miles from Laodicea, is Denizli, which has been

styled (but I am inclined to think, incorrectly) the ancient Colosse; it is a considerable town, about four hundred Christians, Greeks and Armenians, each of whom has a church. I regret, however, to say, that here also the most extravagant tales of miracles, and fabulous accounts of angels, saints, and relics, had so usurped the place of the Scriptures as to render it very difficult to separate, in their minds, divine truths from human inventions. I felt that here that unhappy time was come when men should 'turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables.' I had with me some copies of the Gospels in ancient Greek, which I distributed here, as in some other places through which I had passed. Eski-hisar, close to which are the remains of ancient Laodicea, about fifty poor inhabitants, in which number are but two Christians, who live together in a small mill—unhappily, neither could read at all; the copy, therefore, of the New Testament, which I intended for this church, I left with that of Denizli, the offspring and poor remains of Laodicea and Colosse. The prayers of the mosque are the only prayers which are heard near the ruins of Laodicea, on which the threat seems to have been fully executed, in its utter rejection as a church.

"4. I left it for PHILADELPHIA, now Alah-shehr. It was gratifying to find at last some surviving fruits of early zeal; and here, at least, whatever may be the loss of the spirit of Christianity, there is still the form of a Christian church; this has been kept from the hour of temptation, which came upon all the Christian world. There are here about one thousand Christians, chiefly Greeks, who, for the most part, speak only Turkish. There are twenty-five places of public worship, five of which are large regular churches; to these there is a resident bishop and twenty inferior clergy. A copy of the modern Greek Testament was received by the bishop with great thankfulness.

"5. I quitted Alah-shehr, deeply disappointed at the statement I received there of the church of SARDIS. I trusted that, in its utmost trials, it would not have been suffered to perish utterly, and I heard with surprise, that not a vestige of it remained. With what satisfaction then did I find, on the plains of Sardis, a small church establishment. The few Christians who dwell around modern Sart were anxious to settle there and erect a church, as they were in the habit of meeting at each other's houses for the exercise of religion. From this design they were prohibited by Kar 'Osman Oglu, the Turkish governor of the district, and in consequence, about five years ago, they built a church upon the plain, within view of ancient Sardis, and there they maintain a priest. The place has gradually risen into a little village, now called Tartarkeny; thither the few Christians of Sart, who amount to seven, and those in its immediate vicinity, resort for public worship, and form together a congregation of about forty. There appears then still a remnant—'a few names even in Sardis,' which have been preserved. I cannot repeat the expressions of gratitude with which they received a copy of the New Testament in a language with which they were familiar. Several crowded about the priest to hear it on the spot, and I left them thus engaged.

"6. Ak-hisar, the ancient THYATIRA, is said to contain about thirty thousand inhabitants, of whom three thousand are Christians, all Greeks, except about two hundred Armenians. There is, however, but one Greek church, and one Armenian. The superior of the Greek church, to whom I presented the Romaic Testament, esteemed it so great a treasure, that he earnestly pressed me, if possible, to spare another, that one might be secured to the church, and free from accidents, while the other went round among the people for their private reading. I have, therefore, since my return hither, sent him four copies.

"7. The church of PERGAMOS, in respect to numbers, may be said to flourish still in Bergamo. The town is less than Ak-hisar, but the number of Christians is about as great, the proportion of Armenians to Greeks nearly the same, and each nation also has one church. The bishop of the district, who occasionally resides there, was at that time absent; and I experienced, with deep regret, that the resident clergy were totally incapable of estimating the gift I intended them. I therefore delivered the Testament to the lay vicar of the bishop, at his urgent request, he having assured me that the bishop would highly prize so valuable an acquisition to the church. He seemed much pleased that the benighted state of his nation had excited the attention of strangers.

"Thus, Sir, I have left at least one copy of the unadulterated word of God at each of the seven Asiatic churches of the Apocalypse, and I trust they are not utterly thrown away; but whoever may plant, it is God only who can give the increase; and from his goodness we may hope they will, in due time, bring forth fruit, 'some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold!'

HENRY LINDSAY."

CHAPTER IV.

1 *John seeth the throne of God in heaven.* 4 *The four and twenty elders.* 6 *The four beasts full of eyes before and behind.* 10 *The elders lay down their crowns, and worship him that sat on the throne.*

AFTER this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it

NOTES.—CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1 *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven:*—The apostle, after finishing the addresses

were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

2 And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne.

to the churches in Asia, in which their religious state is clearly marked, says, *I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven*: that is, in the church, the Christian church, the light of which has just arisen in its full-orbed glory, and which is just now being established in the world, and destined to supersede, and ultimately to take the place of all other churches and religions. The appropriateness, the beauty, the glory of this figure, heaven, the material heaven, with its lights to represent the CHRISTIAN CHURCH, it does seem could not, even by inspiration itself, have been surpassed. And that this open door is to admit this highly-favored servant of God to sights and sounds, either physical or mental, which are to give him knowledge of the future, we have only to pursue the language of this verse to be satisfied: *And the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.* Upon this subject take Brebeuf's translation of Lucan:

"From him descended first the fine device
To paint the voice, and to discourse the eyes:
In forms and colors sense to clothe he taught,
And all the various features of a thought."

By this strong voice from the distant future, the apostle is invited to an intimacy with the future; as if he, by being elevated or carried forward, should be present with *things which must be hereafter.*

Verse 2 *And immediately I was in the Spirit*:—St. John was enraptured with *the Spirit* of prophecy. The Lord Jesus Christ presides supreme over his church and people:

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4 And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

And, behold, a throne was set in heaven—in the church—and one sat on the throne.

Verse 3 *And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone*:—Though the Judge is in his appearance and real character perfectly pure, and transcendently glorious, yet judgment in the church in this world is not without mercy and hope, that the believer may look to with full assurance; for there is *a rainbow round about the throne*, which shines gloriously bright, full of almighty promise, even *in sight like unto an emerald*.

Verse 4 *And round about the throne were four and twenty seats*:—This *throne* in the Christian church may look to the mercy-seat in Israel's tabernacle and temple as its prototype, over which the Shekinah, or divine presence, shone with glorious brightness. And these *four and twenty seats* may have reference to the highly responsible and established authority of the princes of the twenty-four courses of the Jewish priests which ministered at the tabernacle and the temple, at first appointed by David, who in many things was an appropriate type of the *King of kings*, the Judge upon this *throne*, the Lord Jesus Christ. The four and twenty princes of the courses had an indefinite number of subordinate priests ministering with them at the altar. And these *four and twenty elders*, crowned with the purest authority, from the highest possible source, from Christ the King and Judge, have placed under them, by the same authority, an infinite number of subordinate clergy in

5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices : and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

the service of the Christian church. But this number of ruling elders in the church, though reference is made to a definite number of princes of the priests in the typical economy, is by no means fixed and definite. By this *white raiment* and these *golden crowns* the ministers in Christ's church may understand that they will not be sustained by him, unless they maintain soundness in faith, in doctrine, and purity of life. With these helps we may perhaps understand the text: *and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders, sitting clothed in white raiment ; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.*

Verse 5 *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices* :—With the authority and order as established above, the Christian age of the world shall enjoy intellectual, moral, religious, DIVINE *light*, such as has never before shone upon the mind and heart of poor, benighted, and bewildered man; because the true *light* now shines, the light of life, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. And warnings, *thunder-toned* and solemn, deep and high, which upon the enlightened mind and heart shall make an impression deep and lasting. And innumerable *voices*, from a full canon of the word of life, the revealment of God's will and gracious purposes towards man, with a living and pure ministry under the direct authority and control of Jesus Christ. The above, and what follows of this verse, as well as almost every thing in this connection, has reference to the tabernacle and temple institutions, ceremonies, and services. *And there were seven lamps of fire burning before*

6 And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne; and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.—Upon this last-quoted scripture, see the note on chap. iii. 1.

Verse 6: *And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal:*—It may be observed here, that St. John saw this throne already set, or established, in heaven; (see verse 2;) for Jesus Christ had always been the Angel, or Messenger, of the covenant: he had always been King in Zion. And how very appropriate and commanding the position of this throne, with the King and Judge seated upon it, to take an unobstructed and perfectly clear view of the transparent sea spread out before in the future and beneath him. And as Isaiah has it in his vision upon this subject, (chap. v. 26 :) *God will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth.* And again, (chap. vi. 1 :) *I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne high and lifted up*—not only exalted, but also far in the distant future. And now, as the perfectly pellucid heaven represents the pure church of Christ, the sea, a denser and more opaque element, represents the church corrupted, secularized. Not, however, the less transparent and clear before the all-penetrating eye of Him who sits upon the throne. It may not be out of place to observe here, that though Christ's authority over the church is neither destroyed nor abated by its corruption, yet he does not deign to sit enthroned in the midst of its corruptions, any more than the SHEKINAH did to manifest himself over the mercy-seat in the temple, after the true worship had departed. There have been, however, always existing—there are still existing, and ever will be—true worshipers, whether found in

the tabernacle; in the temple, at the established altars, or fled from impurity and from persecution into the mountains and dens and caves of the earth. *And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.*—Though the *living creatures* here seem quite clearly to have reference to the seraphim of Isaiah vi. 2, they most probably represent, as do also Isaiah's seraphim, all the creatures of God in this world, in all ages, who do not rebel against him persistently; and may, perhaps, with great propriety be applied to the four great leading dispensations of God to man—the four ages of the world: the *Patriarchal*, the *Levitical*, or *Mosaic*, the *Prophetic*, and the *CHRISTIAN*. The first, extending from Adam, perhaps, to Abraham; the second, from Abraham, perhaps, to the interruption of the daily sacrifice by the Jewish captivity in Babylon; the third, from this captivity to the nativity of Christ; and the fourth, the entire Christian era; which will doubtless continue until the general judgment. And each of these ages has its representative; a spiritual, immortal man, perfect and complete in all his parts of soul, body, and spirit; and so the more fully prepared to present acceptable praise and honor unto the triune God. The first, or Patriarchal age, has its representative in the person of Enoch, who walked with God three hundred years, and was not, for God took him; the second, or Levitical age, has its representative in the person of Moses, who went up, in obedience to the command of God, from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, even unto the top of Pisgah—and Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there, according to the word of the LORD; and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab. But the controversy which the devil, in his presumption, had with Michael the archangel about the body of Moses, in connection with the scenes of the transfiguration of Christ when Moses and Elias

7 And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.

appeared unto Peter, James, and John, talking with Jesus, seems to prove that the body of Moses did not remain buried in the valley of Moab any more than the body of Jesus Christ remained in Joseph's new tomb; the third, or Prophetic age, has its representative in the person of Elijah, who went up by a whirlwind in a chariot of fire into heaven; and the fourth, or Christian age, has its representative in the person of Jesus, who was crucified, *and was dead*; but who said unto St. John, *Behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.* And many, very many, in each and all of these ages, continue in sweet union and communion with Him that sitteth upon the throne, and cling to and linger about the joys which are *round about the throne.* And each and all of these ages possessed and exercised the powers of vision into both the past and the future—*are full of eyes before and behind.*

Verse 7 *And the first beast was like a lion,*—Originally all people were recognized as belonging to the same great brotherhood of God's intellectual and moral creatures; and the young and growing members of each individual family being cared for and nourished by the father, he very naturally exercised the authority of controlling and governing them, and of teaching them what he himself knew of religion, and led them in their devotions. And as men in the early history of the world lived to a great age, so that a family did become greatly extended and multiplied in its branches during the lifetime of the father; and as all history of religion and government had to be learned by tradition, so that the most aged were able to give the most in-

struction, the patriarchal form of government was quite naturally the result, and the father of a whole tribe or nation became their governor and priest. The lion seems very appropriately to represent the patriarchal form of government, which was—in its power and authority—absolute, both politically and religiously. But as the patriarch was also the father of the tribe, or nation, this great power was much softened by natural affection; but as the world as it grew older became more and more wicked, even this restraint became—in some instances perhaps—quite a nullity, and the good providence of God saw fit to change this form of government. *And the second beast like a calf*,—Sacrifice, in the exercises of religion, was known from the earliest times; and when God would—through Abraham and his seed—reveal himself and his will more fully to man, the bloody rite of circumcision was added, as naturally applicable to the age, and as typical of the great atonement as the other. And it also served as a sign and seal unto Abraham and his seed that he was taken into covenant relation with God; selected from among the tribes of earth who had strayed from him, and became idolatrous. Abraham and his descendants were domesticated, and instructed more fully—as they were able to receive it—in the truths of religion by direct revelations from God. For the sake of brevity, (which is quite common in prophetic language,) to take one victim to represent all the sacrifices offered in the Levitical, or typical age, pointing to the one great sacrifice to be offered once in the end of the world, certainly nothing could more appropriately represent all these, and this dispensation, or age, than the *calf*, or ox. *And the third beast had a face as a man*,—As the great burden of the great mission of the prophets was to represent the Son of God as the Son of man, or to adumbrate in prophetic language the great mystery of God manifest in the flesh—or, as St. Paul expresses it in

1 Timothy iii. 16: *Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory*—the incarnation, though an unfathomable mystery, the faith of the believer was justified by the power of the divine Spirit, by which the laws of nature were suspended, and evident miracles performed. And the time and circumstances of Christ's coming were seen and predicted by the angels, messengers, or prophets, of the prophetic age. Though every age and dispensation of the world has had its prophets and its prophecies, yet that period intervening between the interruption of the regular sacrifice by the captivity of the Jews and the coming of Christ, being distinguished by its great number of great prophets, is called the prophetic age. And now, when we consider man as the intellectual order among God's creatures on earth; and the uncovered countenance of man as expressive of his intelligence; and especially when we consider the soul as looking out, by means of the eyes, from the very arch of the uncovered front of intellectuality and moral responsibility, and looking forward, by inspiration of God, into futurity, what—may we not inquire with emphasis?—what could more appropriately represent this age than *the face of a man?* And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.—And now again, when we consider man as being turned loose and made free by Christianity, not only from the superstitions, ignorance, and darkness, of paganism, but also from the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the former dispensations even of the true religion, and so elevated and enlightened by the true light that lighteth every man—the atonement and teachings of Jesus Christ, and the light and impressions of the Holy Spirit, sent forth from the Father and the Son—and the rapidity with which Christianity spread, near the commencement of this age—what

8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

could more appropriately represent it than the spread eagle, flying with almost incredible velocity in the midst of the same *heaven* that represents the Christian church, with its eyes fixed with a steady gaze (as it is said to be able to do) upon that same *sun*, the luminary of *heaven*, and that represents the *earth*, perfect light of truth, revealed by Jesus Christ, who is the light, the life, and the glory of this age and dispensation? Naturalists tell us that birds have a peculiar capacity of adapting their organs of vision to the distance of the object to be looked upon, and that the eagle is endowed with this capacity to a degree of perfection surpassing that of all other birds. And we may also add here that the most uncultivated and rude state of society in the infancy of the world, with the most simple, least complicated form of government, is thus represented by the king of wild beasts; the more civilized and cultivated by a domestic and useful animal, and the one too of perhaps the most importance to that age in the exercises of religion; the more intelligent and highly cultivated state, by the face of a man; and the still more rapidly rising and advancing state of society, by a flying eagle. And the character and state of society in each of these ages, or dispensations, has reference to the nature and character of its government, as well as to the purity and power of its religion.

Verse 8 *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him*;—After having noticed in the note on verse 6, the reference to Isaiah's prophecy on the same subject, we may add here that Isaiah's prophecy, commencing with chap. v. 26, and ending with chap. vi. 4, and Ezekiel's

prophecy commencing with chap. i. 4, and ending with chap. xii. 22; (Ezekiel associated this with other subjects in this connection;) and this prophecy of St. John's in this place, are undoubtedly on the same subject. And *the four beasts* here, and the four living creatures and seraphim in Ezekiel, and the seraphim in Isaiah, are the same. The use of the wings in Isaiah, and of the wings and wheels in Ezekiel, may aid us much in understanding the meaning of the *six wings* here. As but two of the six wings of the seraphim in Isaiah are used for the purpose of locomotion; and as with two they cover their faces, or extend them upward and forward; and as with two they cover their feet, or extend them downward and backward; and as Ezekiel's living creatures have each but four wings, employing wheels instead of wings for locomotion; and as two of these wings of one of these living creatures were stretched upward and forward, and joined with two wings of another which covered their bodies, or extended downward and backward; and as it is religion and government which advance, carry forward, or conduct the interests of society in each and every age of the world, civilizing barbarians; I understand the two active wings of the seraphim, and moving wheels of the living creatures, and the *wings* of these *beasts, living beings, or immortalities*, (as Dr. Croly seems inclined to translate it,) to represent these two great interests, or moving elements, of good society—a pure church and good government. The connection of these wings, as noted above, may be better understood by reference to the facts of sacred history. The gradual abrogation of the form of government and the modification of the forms of religious devotion prevalent in the first grand division of the ages of the world, may commence with the establishment of God's covenant with Abraham, and find their completion, and the full establishment of the forms prevalent, in the second, at

the giving of the divine law unto Moses on Mount Sinai. The partial abrogation of the forms prevalent in the second grand division, and the more effectual establishment of those most prevalent in the third grand division, of the ages of the world, may commence with the severe and public test of divine authority and power between God's prophet—Elijah—and the prophets of Baal, and end with the interruption of the daily sacrifice at the time of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon. We call this a partial change, because it was not a radical and complete change; and we may do well on this subject to scrutinize the peculiar language in the description of the third beast. He is not described as an entirely distinct living creature; but of him it is said that he had a *face* as a man. This distinguishing feature is most wonderfully expressive of prophetic vision. And finally, the entire abrogation and substantial modification of all the forms and ceremonies in all previous ages not in perfect harmony with the clear, the perfect revelation, of God's will, by the refulgent light of divine truth, commencing with the birth of Christ, and perhaps extending to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, when the priests were destroyed, the altars and temple demolished, and the unbelieving Jews dispersed; the last prophecy having been uttered and recorded, the sacred canon closed, and the curse pronounced upon any man who should presume to add unto or diminish aught from that which was already written. And these *four living beings*, rising one above another in their successive order, and each being *full of eyes within*; enjoying the lights of their own times, as well as the history of the past and prophetic vision of the future; or, having the means of spiritual light and knowledge, *they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Verse 9. *And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne,*—To be still more fully convinced—if need be—that the above view of these *beasts* is correct, we have only to inquire: From whence, but from the good and faithful of good society in all ages, arises that great voice of great praise and *glory, and honour, and thanks*, to the great Lord and Saviour, who *sitteth upon the throne*, and *who liveth for ever and ever*? And then to inquire: What is the employment of these *immortal ones* throughout this book? All the leading dispensations of God's providence and grace to man in all ages, joined together, as we have seen, by these wings; the leading and principal means employed for sustaining and advancing all of man's best interests for time and for eternity, and approximating—as rapidly as poor, vile, human nature will permit—toward that high and most desirable state of soundness of principle and purity of administration in government, and that soundness in faith, and purity of life in religion, which are destined ultimately to constitute the excellency of both church and state, are but doing their appropriate work in giving *glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sitteth upon the throne*. And now, what can possibly be more appropriate than for those near the sacred presence, occupying elevated seats *round about the throne*, and most actively and constantly employed in advancing the interests of religion, to sound a note of praise? And

Verse 10 *The four and twenty elders fall down before him*

11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Verse 11 *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*—In connection with the vivid representation in the preceding part of this chapter, of Jesus Christ seated upon the throne as Lord and Judge of his church and people, take verse 8, and onward to the close of the chapter, and the parallel prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, referred to in the notes here, and inquire: What is the testimony of the four grand divisions of the grand army of the redeemed, purified, and saved, of all ages, concerning the true character of their Lord, of him that sitteth upon the throne? And, if these innumerable hosts are not mistaken, he is the HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, which was, and is, and is to come. And if the four and twenty elders who occupy elevated seats round about the throne are not mistaken, *He created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created.* And now, if all this accumulated testimony from the good and true of all ages, proves any thing, it proves that Jesus Christ is the true God and eternal life, as St. John expresses it near the close of his first General Epistle. But if all this does not prove any thing, then certainly no testimony on any subject is of any value.

CHAPTER V.

1 *The book sealed with seven seals;—5 which only the Lamb that was slain is worthy to open.* 9 *Therefore the*

elders praise him, and confess that he redeemed them with his blood.

AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

NOTES.—CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals.*—How very appropriate is this figure! As every one knows, books anciently were parchment rolls; and as this book represents time, and as it was sealed with a number of seals, denoting perfection, no one could possibly open and read, or even look upon it, except as time itself unrolled it. The writing within the roll most certainly was in reference to future events, whereas that on the back, or outer side perhaps recorded the history of the past. This book is in the divine hand, and its being in his right hand indicates favor.

Verse 2 *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?*—The great interest and strong solicitude to know with certainty, and some degree of clearness at least, what is coming upon the world, places a herald or messenger with a loud voice, to call for a seer to read, or procure to be written and read in some way, the contents of this book, before the regular unrolling of it, in the current history of men and things in this world.

Verse 3 *And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither*

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.—The distressing intelligence which this response brings to the call of the herald of verse 2 is, *No man in heaven*—that is, in the church; *nor in earth*—that is, in any government: so that no living man, in all the world, was found able to accomplish the so much desired work; *neither under the earth*—neither any soul of the departed—*was able to open the book*; which we may see by reference to chap. vi. 9, 10—for if they knew the future, they would not so anxiously inquire, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* Wonderful and stupendous as are the endowments and powers of man, as they have been evinced and developed in the discoveries and demonstrations of the sciences and of the arts, yet the knowledge of the dark, the mysterious future, is too wonderful for him. And now that, among all the discoveries of great, important, and useful truths in nature and in art, not one man is found able to trace a line or develop an idea of what is coming upon him, for his enjoyment or for his endurance, is certainly sufficient cause for the apostle's weeping.

Verse 4 *And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.*

Verse 5 *And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*—And is it possible that one, and only one, of the four and twenty elders, so intimately associated with this great and glorious LORD upon the throne, understands with

6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

sufficient clearness the mysterious union of the divine and human natures of this wonderful Being, to teach that while he is of the tribe, the descendant of Juda, he is the Root, the Origin, the Originator, the Creator, of David? And if a Creator at all, the Creator of all things, and possessing all power, he prevailed to open the book; and being omniscient also, knows perfectly, and can enable his servant to *write the things which shall be hereafter*. And now, although the *sealing* was perfect, yet almighty power *hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof*.

Verse 6 *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain*,—This *Lamb* that was *slain*—this risen and glorious human nature of Jesus Christ—is now, henceforth, and to all eternity, in union with the Divinity. Not as *the four living creatures, and the elders, round about the throne*, but *in the midst of the throne*, and identical with Him who presides there. The apostle, after having in the latter part of the preceding chapter made the argument upon the divinity of Jesus Christ, the second person in the Trinity, conclusive and incontrovertible, makes it his business to show, in this and the following verses, that though there is a distinction, as in verse 7, between the nature of Jesus Christ, consubstantial with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and the risen, exalted, and gloriously divine humanity of Christ, the *Lamb* that was slain, in his office as Mediator, and the work accomplished by him, yet the very nature of the work performed by him, the redemption of the lost by the sacrifice of himself—the victory he gained

7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and in his conflict with death—his triumphant resurrection—his glorious ascension—and the divine honors paid to him—the worship, the adoration of *the four living creatures, the four and twenty elders*, and the innumerable host, *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*, establish beyond all controversy the truth of the union, the unity, the identity—notwithstanding the diversity—of the two whole and perfect natures in union in the person of Jesus Christ. Though the finite mind may not, and really does not, comprehend either the manner or the possibility of this union, any more than it does the union of matter and spirit in man, it is nevertheless a truth which is made a subject of revelation from God. And the reason is very clear. It is man's duty to worship the Lamb, consequently he must know that Jesus Christ is *God and the Lamb*. This point being settled, we are now prepared to proceed. The *Lamb having seven horns*—emblematic of perfect, of unlimited power; *and seven eyes*—emblematic of perfect, of infinite wisdom. These *seven eyes*, this omniscience, is here said to be *the seven Spirits of God* and the *Lamb, having seven horns*, as well as *seven eyes*, being omnipotent as well as omniscient, is prepared *to go forth into all the earth*, and to discern perfectly and control properly, in view of their true character, all moral creatures and all moral actions, as well in all governments as in the church in all her borders. On *the seven Spirits of God*, see the notes on chap. iii. 1.

Verse 7 *And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.*—The *Lamb* that took the book is the *Lion of the tribe of Juda*, who prevailed to open the book.

Verse 8 *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts*

four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ;

and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb,— The same adoration, by the same purified spirits, is here given to *the Lamb*, that is given in chap. iv. to the *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty*. And these adoring, loving, pure spirits, harmoniously blend the melody of instruments of music with the voice of praise, adoration, and glory ; or their tuneful organs have been rendered capable of the most perfect melody. And these adoring ones pour out of full hearts the sacrifice of prayer, and thanksgiving, and glorious praise, as an oblation out of *golden vials full of odours*.

Verse 9. *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof:—*This *new song*—this most excellent of all songs—the song of redemption by the blood of the Lamb ; and not only of the salvation of the individual soul that believes, but also of the salvation of the world, ultimately, from error and from corruption of every kind, in religion and in government, when the millennium shall come. For to this glorious period the remainder of this chapter, as well as the twentieth, and other portions of this book, has reference. Upon this glorious subject many of the ancient prophets have sweetly sung ; but none, perhaps, more sweetly than David, in many places in the Psalms : we refer only to one place—from the ninety-sixth to the ninety-ninth divisions inclusive. What could be more appropriate than that he who redeemed all men unto God, by his own blood, should *take* into his

10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

own almighty hand *the book* of time, and open to man *the seals thereof*? And then, what in return could be more appropriate and beautiful than that the redeemed and saved, *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*, should swell the notes, as in the following verses, of this *new*, this transcendently glorious, *song* of praise?

Verse 10 *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests:—The Lamb*, having *taken the book*, and having *opened all the seals thereof*; and having established the peaceful and glorious reign of righteousness over all people, of all nations and climes, *has* in the two grand departments of his holy empire, the national and the ecclesiastical, *made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth*.

Verse 11 *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne*,—These *many angels* may be the numerous messengers of the many kings and kingdoms of this universal empire. And their *voice*, united with the voices of *the immortal ones and of the elders*, swells greatly the glorious notes of the *new song*. And these myriads of myriads, notwithstanding their inconceivably great and overwhelming numbers, all *sing this new* and transcendently glorious *song* in unison.

Verse 12 *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and*

13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.—This septenary form is the voice of all praise from all the redeemed and saved, unto Him who is almighty, and who possesseth all things, and whose all-seeing wisdom, and *strength* of almighty purpose, has thus finally brought them all to ascribe *honour and glory* unto Him who is *blessed* for evermore.

Verse 13 *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth,*—The full-orbed splendors of millennial glory having opened upon the church, in all her borders, and upon the world everywhere, so that all things, as well as all men, in the church—her teachings, her institutions, her principles—the spirit prevailing, and universally actuating and controlling all the ministry and membership, being pure, all with one voice ascribe *honour and glory* unto Him who is the author of all this purity and harmony. And then all things as well as all men, *on the earth, and under the earth*, the principles upon which all law and order rest in all governments, as well with the governed as with those under authority, and with governors, or those upon whom the highest responsibility of governments rests, *and such as are in the sea*—*Babylon* having been destroyed before the coming of the millennium, and nothing impure being left of the Roman church and government, such as came out of her that they might escape her destruction, also unite their voice of universal praise with all the rest. So that we see, in the millennial reign of righteousness, nothing shall be left to mar—nothing to hurt or destroy—in all God's holy mountain. For, *all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing,*

14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Verse 14 *And the four beasts said, Amen.*—Now, when the world has reached the perfection of the last, and the best one of all its dispensations, the millennium of the Christian age; and when all people and all things bless, and honor, and glorify God and the Lamb, the *four living creatures*, all the leading dispensations of God's gracious favor to the world, present their representatives (for millennial glory has already witnessed the first resurrection) to sound their note in this triumphantly glorious song of glorious praise. And what is that note? AMEN. *And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*—As *twenty-four* is wanting in the most eminent MSS. and versions, and as *him that liveth for ever* is also wanting in so many MSS. and versions, and some ancient commentaries, (see Dr. Clarke on this place,) it is quite probable that this last clause expresses the devotion of the *elders* in a general way. *And the elders fell down and worshipped.* And how beautifully becoming that they by whose office and ministry the good and true of all ages have been brought to glory, and honor—immortality, should cry AMEN to the worship of the Lamb; and thus seeing the glorious success of their labors, should now *fall down and worship.*

CHAPTER VI.

1 *The opening of the seals in order, and what followed thereupon.* 12 *A prophecy of the great day of God's wrath.*

AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

NOTES.—CHAPTER VI.

Verse 1 *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, —The opening of a door in heaven, as in chap. iv. 1, and the opening of this seal, are so very similar as to impress an investigating mind with the fact of their very intimate connection. And, fortunately for us, each of these chapters, in its commencement, helps to unfold the mysteries of the other; for while the opening of the first seal here affords testimony very strong and clear that heaven in chap. iv. 1, 2, is a figure applied to the Christian church, these two verses afford testimony equally strong and clear that the opening of this seal applies to the establishment of Christianity in the world. And I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.—The noise of thunder here, at the opening of this seal, with the invitation to Come and see; and the voice of a trumpet, with the invitation to Come up higher, and the assurance, I will shew thee things which must be hereafter, in chap. iv., are so very similar as to leave no cause for a reasonable doubt that the revelation of the opened door and the opened seal are so identical as to apply to the same great event—the full, the perfect, revelation of God's will to man, and the establishment of Christianity in the world.*

Verse 2 *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him:—The throne that was set in heaven (in the church) with a rainbow round about it; and the wonderful description of him that*

sat upon it, in chap. iv.; and the *white horse* and his rider, with a *bow and a crown*, here are manifestly and unquestionably identical. This gloriously enthroned King of saints, upon the *white horse* of royalty and purity, with the *bow* of promise, and the *crown* of authority and power, and of glorious success and victory, *went forth conquering and to conquer*. The truth of this prophecy, as well as the correctness of its application here, is established by the history of the church and of the world during the first ages of Christianity. There is so much history—sacred and profane—that would be appropriate here, that it is somewhat difficult to select. We will, however, begin with St. Matthew's succinct account of the doings and teachings of Jesus Christ, and the effect produced in chap. iv. 23, 24, 25: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan." The secret of the wonderful success of the apostles on the day of Pentecost may be found in Acts ii. 4: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The result may be found in verse 41: "Then they that gladly received his (Peter's) word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The first success of the gospel among the Gentiles was an interesting occasion—Peter preaching to Cornelius and his many friends; when his

Jewish prejudices and selfishness gave way: "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts x. 34, 35. In reference to the effect produced by the truths spoken by Peter, verses 44 and 45 inform us that "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Previous to the above—upon the occasion of Peter's healing the lame man at the gate of the temple, "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth," which so exasperated the unbelieving Jews, "the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees," that the apostles were arrested. "Howbeit, many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." By the persecution which arose at the martyrdom of Stephen, the Christians which were at Jerusalem were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. The result of which was the conversion of multitudes of people in all the regions round about. And this dispersion of believers and promulgation of the truth extended as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians. In Iconium also, a great multitude, both of the Jews and also of the Greeks, believed. And many also of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized. And among the idolaters at Ephesus many believed, and destroyed vast numbers of impious books. "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." We must briefly allude to Daniel's prophecy respecting the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, revealed by the opening of the first

seal. It is found in Dan. ii. 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." The everlasting kingdom of God, in Daniel's prophecy; and the *throne* that was *set in heaven, round about which there was a rainbow*, and upon which *one sat, who was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone*; and the *white horse*, and him that *sat on him, with a bow, unto whom a crown was given, who went forth conquering, and to conquer*, are so manifestly designed to represent the same great event—the establishment of Christ's kingdom, the success of his righteous reign, and final triumph—that it would be worse than superfluous to attempt any other proof of the fact than to direct attention to these texts of Scripture in connection. Upon the subject of the establishment and success of Christianity, we have only given a few brief extracts from sacred history, because in notes on only two verses we could not afford space for more. We proceed now to make a few quotations from profane history. The following is from an English author—History of the Christian Church, by William Jones: "It appears from credible records, that the gospel was preached in Idumea, Syria, and Mesopotamia, by Jude; in Egypt, Marmarica, Mauritania, and other parts of Africa, by Mark, Simeon, and Jude; in Ethiopia, by the Eunuch and Matthias; in Pontus, Galatia, and the neighboring parts of Asia, by Peter; in the territories of the seven Asiatic churches, by John; in Parthia, by Matthew; in Scythia, by Philip and Andrew; in the northern and western parts of Asia, by Bartholomew; in Persia, by Simeon and Jude; in Media, Carmania, etc., by Thomas; from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, by Paul, who also published it in Italy, and probably in Spain, Gaul, and

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

Britain." Another brief extract from the same historian: "Many Christian churches were collected by the ministry of the first preachers of the word, of which we have no express mention in that very concise narrative—the Acts of the Apostles. Thus, for instance, we have no particular account of any Christian churches being planted in Cilicia, yet we are informed that Paul and Silas went through Cilicia confirming the churches, which of course must have been previously gathered and set in order. And when we consider that this was Paul's native country, and that previous to his being first brought to Antioch by Barnabas, he had spent some years in it, we may reasonably infer that his ministry had been owned by his divine Master, and that he was the spiritual father of many in the regions of Cilicia. Of the labors of Barnabas and Mark in the island of Cyprus, the sacred history is silent; but that He who commissioned his apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and who also promised to be always with them while thus engaged, even to the end of the world, did own their labors and grant them success, it were unreasonable to doubt." Were we patiently and faithfully to quote all the history extant—both sacred and profane—on this subject, we would still be compelled to suppose the record incomplete (as it must be until the revelations of the last day) of the triumphs of truth over error, during this period of the Christian era.

Verse 3 *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.*—How exceedingly appropriate that the opening of the *second seal*—bringing to view the scenes of this bloody period of the history of the church and the world, to which it most certainly applies—should

4 And there went out another horse *that was red*: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

be heralded or announced by *the second beast*—the emblem of the age, distinguished for its victims and blood in its religious rites and ceremonies.

Verse 4 *And there went out another horse that was red*:—The opening of the second seal seems quite clearly to unfold the scenes developed by the invasion of Judea and the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The Roman world, or empire, having enjoyed comparative peace for a number of years before the crucifixion of Christ, he, a short time previous to his passion, uttered a prophecy upon this subject, which is recorded by St. Matthew in chap. xxiv., St. Mark in chap. xiii., and St. Luke in chap. xxi., and St. John in the accomplishment of this part of the work with which he is charged in the Apocalypse (for he has omitted to record Christ's prophecy in his gospel.) In this, however, he is charged, *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter*; and at the opening of the second seal he briefly records it in two verses: "*And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.*"—We must mark the peculiar phraseology here: *power* being given by divine providence *unto him that sat on the red horse, to take peace from the earth*; for Titus, the heathen Roman general; and Josephus, the Jewish historian, are solemnly impressed all the while that the judgments of a justly offended God are being poured out upon this vilely

rebellious people. *And that they should kill one another*.—So malicious and deadly was the enmity existing between the factions of the Jews that, even while their country was invaded, and their capital city was besieged, by the Roman army, they destroyed one another with fiendish violence, and consumed with their own hands, the vast stores of grain which, if they had preserved it, would have prevented the fearful famine which consumed them. These things, in connection with the great sword wielded against them by the Romans, produced that degree of misery, and that amount of destruction, which extorted from Josephus the following, in his Wars of the Jews, Book V., c. viii., sec. 5: “It is therefore impossible to go distinctly over every instance of these men’s iniquity; I shall therefore speak my mind here at once briefly: That neither did any other city ever suffer such miseries, nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was, from the beginning of the world.” For Josephus, after having given an account of the procedure of John and Simon, with their respective parties, had said, “So they were taken by the means of the famine, which it was impossible they should have been unless they had thus prepared the way for it by this procedure.” Josephus, in his sixth book of the wars, having given an account of a woman in very opulent circumstances, and of high cultivation, whose name was Mary, and her father’s name was Eleazar, who having lived beyond Jordan, upon the invasion of Judea, had taken refuge in Jerusalem, and who had been driven to such extremities by the famine, that she had slain her own son—an infant that had just been sucking at her breast—and roasted it, and satisfied the cravings of her appetite upon its tender flesh, the odor of which attracted the voracious passers-by into her house, to extort from her the food they smelt; whereupon she set the remainder of the delicate dish before them, in-

sisting that they should eat, and not pretend to be more scrupulous than the tender mother of the dear child; assuring them that she had eaten of it. Josephus, I say, having recorded these circumstances, says, "After which these men went out trembling, being never so much frightened at any thing as they were at this; and with some difficulty they left the rest of that meat to the mother. Upon which the whole city was full of this horrid action immediately; and while everybody laid this miserable case before their own eyes, they trembled as if this unheard-of action had been done by themselves. So those that were thus distressed by the famine were very desirous to die, and those already dead were esteemed happy, because they had not lived long enough either to hear or to see such miseries." And again, in the same Book, chap. iv., after giving an account of the manner in which the temple was set on fire and consumed, Josephus says, "And now a certain person came running to Titus and told him of this fire, as he was resting himself in his tent after the last battle; whereupon he rose up in great haste, and as he was, ran to the holy house in order to have a stop put to the fire. After him followed all his commanders, and after them followed the several legions, in great astonishment. So there was a great clamor and tumult raised, as was natural upon the disorderly motion of so great an army. Then did Cæsar, both by calling to the soldiers that were fighting, with a loud voice, and by giving a signal to them with his right hand, order them to quench the fire; but they did not hear what he said, though he spake so loud, having their ears already dinned by a greater noise another way; nor did they attend to the signal he made with his hand neither, as still some of them were distracted with fighting, and others with passion; but as for the legions that came running thither, neither any persuasions nor any threatenings could restrain their vio-

lence, but each one's own passion was his commander at this time; and as they were crowding into the temple together, many of them were trampled on by one another, while a great number fell among the ruins of the cloisters which were still hot and smoking, and were destroyed in the same miserable way with those whom they had conquered; and when they were come near the holy house, they made as if they did not so much as hear Cæsar's orders to the contrary, but they encouraged those that were before them to set it on fire. As for the seditious, they were in too great distress already to afford their assistance toward quenching the fire; they were everywhere slain, and everywhere beaten; and as for a great part of the people, they were weak, and without arms, and had their throats cut wherever they were caught. Now, round about the altar lay dead bodies heaped one upon another, as at the steps going up to it ran a great quantity of their blood; whither also the dead bodies that were slain above—on the altar—fell down." Again, from chap. vii., of the same Book: "Nor was there any place in the city that had no dead bodies in it, but what was entirely covered with those that were killed either by the famine or by the rebellion; and all was full of the dead bodies of such as had perished either by that sedition or by that famine." Again, from chap. ix. of the same Book: "Now the number of those that were carried captives during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand, as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand, the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation with the citizens of Jerusalem, but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army, which at the very first occasioned so great a straitness among them that there came a pestilential de-

struction upon them, and soon afterward such a famine as destroyed them more suddenly." From the History of the Christian Church, by William Jones: "On the eighth of September (perhaps A. D. 70) the city was taken and entered by Titus. Justus Lipsius has been at the pains to compute the numbers of Jews that are said by Josephus to have perished from the beginning to the conclusion of the war; and for the reader's satisfaction I subjoin them :

JEW'S KILLED IN AND OUT OF JUDEA.

At Jerusalem, by order of Florus.....	3,630
At Cæsarea, by the inhabitants.....	20,000
At Scythopolis, in Syria.....	30,000
At Ascalon, by the inhabitants.....	2,500
At Ptolemais.....	2,000
At Alexandria in Egypt, under Tiberius Alexander	50,000
At Damascus.....	10,000
At the taking of Joppa.....	8,400
In the mountain of Cabula.....	2,000
In a battle at Ascalon.....	10,000
In an ambush.....	8,000
At the taking of Apheck.....	15,000
Upon Mount Gerizim.....	11,600
Drowned at Joppa in a sudden storm.....	4,200
Killed at Terichea.....	6,500
Killed at Gamala.....	9,000
Killed in their flight from Gischala.....	2,000
Killed at the siege of Jotapata.....	30,000
Killed, of the Gadarenes, besides many drowned..	13,000
Killed in the villages of Idumea.....	10,000
Killed at Gerisum.....	1,000
Killed at Macheron.....	1,700
Killed in the desert of Jarden.....	3,000
Slew themselves at Massala.....	960
In Cyrene, by the Governor Catulus.....	3,000
Perished at Jerusalem, by the sword, pestilence, famine, and during the siege.....	1,100,000
Total.....	1,357,490

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

According to this account the whole amounts to one million three hundred and fifty-seven thousand four hundred and ninety, besides a vast multitude that died in the caves, woods, wildernesses, common sewers, in banishment, and various other ways, of whom no computation could be made. To which must also be added ten thousand slain at Jotapata more than our author has mentioned; for Josephus expressly mentions forty thousand, but he only thirty thousand. To these if we add ninety thousand (Josephus says ninety-seven thousand) taken prisoners, apparently doomed to a captivity worse than death; and eleven thousand who are said to have perished either through the neglect of their keepers, or their own sullen despair, the amount will be scarcely less than A MILLION AND A HALF!"

We must not suppose, because there is an intimate connection, in point of time, between the first and second seals, that there is consequently the same intimate connection between all the seals. But we have only to read on, and mark well the numerous figures following the opening of the seals, which only bring to view the great outline, the grand, cardinal points in this bold sketch, to see that there is much yet to be done in the way of filling up, by the inspired artist, to finish this sublime picture.

Verse 5 *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse;*—The developments of the third seal seem very forcibly to represent the distinguishing features of Moham-medanism. Though the scenes developed by the rider upon the horse that was red, were truly sanguinary, exceedingly

bloody, yet the Roman invasion contemplated not, nor seemed to desire, the destruction of Christianity, or even of Judaism: whereas the rider upon the black horse, (Mohammed,) by conquest labored to exterminate the unbelievers—and all were styled unbelievers who would not submit to his authority, both ecclesiastical and regal; in which if he had been entirely successful, blackness of darkness, instead of the light of truth, would have been the consequence. For the degree of his success, we must turn to history. (Before we do this, however, we may note that the original, rendered in this verse, a pair of balances, most certainly means a yoke. And this well represents the government established by Mohammed over his followers, and which he wished to establish in all his conquests. We quote from the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon, vol. v. p. 100: “Mahomet, or more properly Mohammed, the only son of Abdallah and Amina, was born at Mecca, four years after the death of Justinian, and two months after the defeat of the Abyssinians, whose victory would have introduced into the Caaba the religion of the Christians. . . . In his twenty-fifth year he entered into the service of Cadijah, a rich widow of Mecca, who soon rewarded his fidelity with the gift of her hand and fortune. . . . By this alliance, the son of Abdallah was restored to the station of his ancestors; and the judicious matron was content with his domestic virtues till, in the fortieth year of his age, he assumed the title of a prophet, and proclaimed the religion of the Koran. . . . The son of Abdallah was educated in the bosom of the noblest race, in the use of the purest dialect of Arabia; and the fluency of his speech was corrected and enhanced by the practice of discreet and seasonable silence. With these powers of eloquence, Mahomet was an illiterate barbarian. . . . Yet the book of nature and of man was open to his view. . . .

I cannot perceive in the life or writings of Mahomet, that his prospect was far extended beyond the limits of the Arabian world. From every region of that solitary world, the pilgrims of Mecca were annually assembled by the calls of devotion and commerce: in the free concourse of multitudes, a simple citizen, in his native tongue, might study the political state and character of the tribes, the theory and practice of the Jews and Christians. . . . Conversation enriches the understanding, but solitude is the school of genius; and the uniformity of a work denotes the hand of a single artist. From his earliest youth, Mahomet was addicted to religious contemplation. Each year, during the month of Ramadan, he withdrew from the world and from the arms of Cadijah; in the cave of Hera, three miles from Mecca, he consulted the spirit of fraud or enthusiasm, whose abode is not in the heavens, but in the mind of the prophet. The faith which, under the name of *Islam*, he preached to his family and nation, is compounded of an eternal truth and a necessary fiction, THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD, AND THAT MAHOMET IS THE APOSTLE OF GOD."

After recording an account of the rejection of Mohammed by the prominent citizens of Mecca, and his flight to Medina, Gibbon says, "From his establishment at Medina, Mahomet assumed the exercise of the regal and sacerdotal office; and it was impious to appeal from a judge whose decrees were inspired by the divine wisdom. . . . The fair option of friendship, or submission, or battle, was proposed to the enemies of Mahomet. . . . In the first months of his reign he practiced the lessons of holy warfare, and displayed his white banner before the gates of Medina; the martial apostle fought in person at nine battles or sieges; and fifty enterprises of war were achieved in ten years by himself or his lieutenants. . . . 'The sword,' says 'Mahomet, 'is the key of heaven and of hell; a drop of blood

shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting or prayer; whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven; at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubim.”

After the conquest of Mecca, and the victory of the Moslems over the pagan Arabs, “the *fugitives* and *auxiliaries* complained that they who had borne the burden were neglected in the season of victory. ‘Alas!’ replied their artful leader, ‘suffer me to conciliate these recent enemies, these doubtful proselytes, by the gift of some perishable goods. To your guard I intrust my life and fortunes. You are the companions of my exile, of my kingdom, of my paradise.’ He was followed by the deputies of Tayef, who dreaded the repetition of a siege. ‘Grant us, O apostle of God! a truce of three years, with the toleration of our ancient worship.’ ‘Not a month, not an hour.’ ‘Excuse us at least from the obligation of prayer.’ ‘Without prayer, religion is of no avail.’ They submitted in silence; their temples were demolished, and the same sentence of destruction was executed on all the idols of Arabia. His lieutenants, on the shores of the Red Sea, the Ocean, and the Gulf of Persia, were saluted by the acclamations of a faithful people, and the ambassadors who knelt before the throne of Medina, were as numerous (says the Arabian proverb) as the dates from the maturity of a palm-tree. The nation submitted to the God and the scepter of Mahomet; the opprobrious name of tribute was abolished; the spontaneous or reluctant oblations of arms and tithes were applied to the service of religion, and one hundred and fourteen thousand Moslems accompanied the last pilgrimage of the apostle.”

After the conquest of his own country, and the submission of his own people, the Arabian prophet contemplated

the conquest of other countries, even that of the Roman empire. And we quote again from Gibbon: "When Heraclius returned in triumph from the Persian war, he entertained, at Emesa, one of the ambassadors of Mahomet, who invited the princes and nations of the earth to the profession of Islam." In the invasion of that part of Palestine which lies eastward of the Jordan, after the fall of Zeid, the slave of the prophet, who had the command, and after three other leaders of the Moslems were slain, "the falling standard was rescued by Caled, the proselyte of Mecca; nine swords were broken in his hand, and his valor withstood and repulsed the superior numbers of the Christians. In the nocturnal council of the camp he was chosen to command; his skillful evolutions of the ensuing day secured either the victory or the retreat of the Saracens, and Caled is renowned among his brethren and his enemies by the glorious appellation of the *Sword of God*."

After the successful reigns of former caliphs, when Ali was promoted to the scepter, "the Saracens," says Gibbon, "had been victorious in the East and West, and the wealthy kingdoms of Persia, Syria, and Egypt, were the patrimony of the faithful." Gibbon, in his fifty-first chapter, continues this subject. We quote one short paragraph here: "In the victorious days of the Roman republic, it had been the aim of the Senate to confine their councils and legions to a single war, and completely to suppress a first enemy before they provoked the hostilities of a second. These timid maxims of policy were disdained by the magnanimity or enthusiasm of the Arabian caliphs. With the same vigor and success they invaded the successors of Augustus and those of Artaxerxes, and the rival monarchies at the same instant became the prey of an enemy whom they had been so long accustomed to despise. In the ten years of the administration of Omar, the Saracens reduced to his obedience thirty-

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

six thousand cities or castles, destroyed four thousand churches or temples of the unbelievers, and edified fourteen hundred mosques 'for the exercise of the religion of Mahomet.' One hundred years after his flight from Mecca, the arms and the reign of his successors extended from India to the Atlantic Ocean, over the various and distinct provinces, which may be comprised under the names of Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain."

We may quote more from the history of these conquests, in noting some other point in this prophecy of St. John, in which he recurs to the same subject, under other emblems.

Verse 6 *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*—We must not fail to notice that this voice is not from him that sat upon the black horse especially, but a voice coming up from the midst of the four beasts, designed to protect the general, the universal interests of society in all ages from the devastations of invading armies, for even the invaders themselves should see the importance of leaving the country capable of supporting human life. So we are informed by their history that even the Saracens were not permitted by Mohammed himself, or by his successors, to destroy the olive-trees and the vines, or to cut down the standing corn upon the fields. Abubekar, one of the successors of the prophet, exhorts his followers: "When you fight the battles of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men without turning your backs; but let not your victory be stained with the blood of women or children. Destroy no

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat.

Verse 7 *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.*—The great noise, or voice, as of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, *Come and see*, as in the development of the first seal, in all probability, proceeded from the fourth living creature; the one which represents the Christian era of the world's history; and the same voice here heralds the opening scenes of the fourth seal. There the horse was white, the scenes bright and glorious: here, the fine gold has become dim, the horse is pale, and the scenes are very much changed.

Verse 8 *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him.*—We are not under the necessity of supposing that all the developments of this seal are entirely disconnected in point of time, with either the preceding or the succeeding seal; though there doubtless is a period of time here in which these scenes occupy the foreground in the picture, and are really the leading characteristics of the age here unfolded to prophetic vision. And though the scenes of the black horse seal, were perpetrated in the name of religion, they were not done in the name of Christianity; whereas, these, though enacted in the name of Christianity, tended not to glorify Him who is the way, the truth, and the life, but really are the ways of error and of death. So we see that the

Pope of Rome, the professed representative of Christ—but who is antichrist—aided by his train of archbishops, bishops, priests, and monks, instead of advancing man in a knowledge of the truth and in the ways of righteousness, gave the moral world a retrograde motion during the dark ages of Christianity, by introducing into the church the worship of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the elevation of the sacred wafer, the pretended redemption of the souls of the departed from purgatorial fires by the payment of a few shillings to the priest for his prayers, the absolving of the sinner for his money, the sale of indulgences for future sins, and a thousand and one superstitions, and various forms of oppression which, instead of enlightening and elevating the mind, render man more earthly, sensual, and devilish, and excite to crusades against the infidels, to the inquisition against heretics, and result in wars, famines, pestilence, and the multiplication of wild beasts in countries where the laborious industry of man had long since subdued the forests. So we think this view is in harmony with the concluding language of the prophecy in this verse. *And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*—And now the difficulty of demonstrating the correctness of the view here taken of this *seal*, by references to history, is absolutely painful—not that there is any want of testimony, but because there is so much history bearing directly on this point, and because we can indulge in transcribing so little in this place. So we must select very sparingly, and as judiciously as possible. We quote from Gibbon's History of Rome, Chapter XLIX: "The primitive Christians were possessed with an unconquerable repugnance to the use and abuse of images; . . . The first introduction of a symbolic worship was in the veneration of the cross and of relics. The saints and mar-

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit-trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat.

Verse 7 *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.*—The great noise, or voice, as of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, *Come and see*, as in the development of the first seal, in all probability, proceeded from the fourth living creature; the one which represents the Christian era of the world's history; and the same voice here heralds the opening scenes of the fourth seal. There the horse was white, the scenes bright and glorious: here, the fine gold has become dim, the horse is pale, and the scenes are very much changed.

Verse 8 *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him.*—We are not under the necessity of supposing that all the developments of this seal are entirely disconnected in point of time, with either the preceding or the succeeding seal; though there doubtless is a period of time here in which these scenes occupy the foreground in the picture, and are really the leading characteristics of the age here unfolded to prophetic vision. And though the scenes of the black horse seal, were perpetrated in the name of religion, they were not done in the name of Christianity; whereas, these, though enacted in the name of Christianity, tended not to glorify Him who is the way, the truth, and the life, but really are the ways of error and of death. So we see that the

Pope of Rome, the professed representative of Christ—but who is antichrist—aided by his train of archbishops, bishops, priests, and monks, instead of advancing man in a knowledge of the truth and in the ways of righteousness, gave the moral world a retrograde motion during the dark ages of Christianity, by introducing into the church the worship of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the elevation of the sacred wafer, the pretended redemption of the souls of the departed from purgatorial fires by the payment of a few shillings to the priest for his prayers, the absolving of the sinner for his money, the sale of indulgences for future sins, and a thousand and one superstitions, and various forms of oppression which, instead of enlightening and elevating the mind, render man more earthly, sensual, and devilish, and excite to crusades against the infidels, to the inquisition against heretics, and result in wars, famines, pestilence, and the multiplication of wild beasts in countries where the laborious industry of man had long since subdued the forests. So we think this view is in harmony with the concluding language of the prophecy in this verse. *And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*—And now the difficulty of demonstrating the correctness of the view here taken of this *seal*, by references to history, is absolutely painful—not that there is any want of testimony, but because there is so much history bearing directly on this point, and because we can indulge in transcribing so little in this place. So we must select very sparingly, and as judiciously as possible. We quote from Gibbon's History of Rome, Chapter XLIX: "The primitive Christians were possessed with an unconquerable repugnance to the use and abuse of images; . . . The first introduction of a symbolic worship was in the veneration of the cross and of relics. The saints and mar-

tyrs whose intercession was implored, were seated on the right hand of God ; but the gracious and often supernatural favors which—in the popular belief—were showered round their tomb, conveyed an unquestionable sanction of the devout pilgrims who visited, and touched, and kissed, these lifeless remains, the memorials of their merits and sufferings. But a memorial more interesting than the skull or the sandals of a departed worthy is the faithful copy of his person and features, delineated by the arts of painting or sculpture. . . . By a slow, though inevitable progression, the honors of the original were conveyed to the copy, the devout Christian prayed before the image of a saint, and the pagan rites of genuflection, luminaries, and incense, again stole into the Catholic church. The scruples of reason or piety were silenced by the strong evidence of visions and miracles ; and the pictures which speak, and move, and bleed, must be endowed with a divine energy, and may be considered as proper objects of religious adoration.” It is impracticable for us to indulge in quotations sufficiently numerous and extensive to give an adequate idea of the superstition and the consequent darkness and corruption of the age ; but we must refer to some points in this history as we proceed. After giving the fabulous account of the image of Edessa, Gibbon says : “The style and sentiments of a Byzantine hymn will declare how far their worship was removed from the grossest idolatry. ‘How can we with mortal eyes contemplate this image, whose celestial splendor the host of heaven presume not to behold ? HE who dwells in heaven condescends this day to visit us by his venerable image ; HE who is seated on the cherubim visits us this day by a picture which the Father has delineated with his immaculate hand, which he has formed in an ineffable manner, and which we sanctify by adoring it with fear and love.’ . . . The most ambitious aspired

from a filial to a fraternal relation with the image of Edessa; and such is the *Veronica* of Rome, or Spain, or Jerusalem, which Christ in his agony and bloody sweat applied to his face, and delivered to a holy matron. The fruitful precedent was speedily transferred to the Virgin Mary, and the saints and martyrs." The Pope of Rome having obtained the custody, and in this superstitious age tried the powers of, the keys in fulminating interdicts, anathemas, and excommunications, coveted also the purse, the scepter, and even the sword, and having long labored for the attainment of these ends, was favored by Pepin and Charlemagne, kings of France. And on this subject we quote again from Gibbon: "It was not in the cause of the iconoclast that Pepin has exposed his person and army in a double expedition beyond the Alps; he possessed and might lawfully alienate his conquests; and to the importunities of the Greeks he piously replied that no human consideration should tempt him to resume the gift which he had conferred on the Roman pontiff for the remission of his sins and the salvation of his soul. The splendid donation was granted in supreme and absolute dominion, and the world beheld, for the first time, a Christian bishop invested with the prerogatives of a temporal prince, the choice of magistrates, and exercise of justice, the imposition of taxes, and the wealth of the palace of Ravenna. In the dissolution of the Lombard kingdom, the inhabitants of the duchy of Spoleto sought a refuge from the storm, shaved their heads after the Roman fashion, declared themselves the servants and subjects of St. Peter, and completed, by this voluntary surrender, the present circle of the ecclesiastical state. That mysterious circle was enlarged to an indefinite extent by the verbal or written donation of Charlemagne who, in the first transports of his victory, despoiled himself and the Greek emperor of the cities and islands which had formerly

been annexed to the Exarchate." And thus we see that the power of the keys, aided by the superstitions of the age, had secured for the successor of St. Peter, all these other great powers. And, "Before the end of the eighth century some apostolic scribe—perhaps the notorious Isidore—composed the Decretals and the Donation of Constantine, the two magic pillars of the spiritual and temporal monarchy of the Popes. This memorable donation was introduced to the world by an epistle of Adrian I., who exhorts Charlemagne to imitate the liberality and revive the name of the great Constantine." A decisive example of the exercise of imperial authority is related of Leo: "On the festival of Christmas, the last year of the eighth century, Charlemagne appeared in the church of St. Peter, and to gratify the vanity of Rome, he had exchanged the simple dress of his country for the habit of a patrician. After the celebration of the holy mysteries, Leo suddenly placed a precious crown on his head, and the dome resounded with the acclamations of the people, 'Long life and victory to Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned by God the great and pacific Emperor of the Romans!' The head and the body of Charlemagne were consecrated by the royal unction; after the example of the Cæsars he was saluted or adored by the pontiff. His coronation oath represents a promise to maintain the faith and privileges of the church; and the first-fruits were paid in his rich offerings to the shrine of the apostle." The papal power continued to increase until after the beginning of the thirteenth century; but there are so many other points in this verse requiring some attention, that we cannot pursue this subject any farther. Though at the time of recording this prophecy there was known unto the Christian and civilized world only three of the grand divisions of earth—Europe, Asia, and Africa—yet it is neither impossible nor improbable that in the light of pro-

phetic vision, a fourth—the western world—was discerned. Be this as it may, however, the scenes before us mainly concern Europe and Asia. And now, passing in silence over the commotions and conflicts of this age between factions of religionists, in maintaining with so much violence their peculiar views and opinions, which resulted in the aggregate in the loss of multitudes of human lives, we can only notice the wholesale slaughters with which fanatical superstition has so profusely furnished the history of these times. The immediate instrumentalities employed in the accomplishment of this work of devastation, according to the language of the prophecy and the facts of history, are war, famine, and pestilence; and not entirely without the aid of wild beasts, even in countries once populous, and quite well cultivated. We quote again from Gibbon's *Rome*, principally from Chapter LVIII: "Among the Franks (about the year one thousand and twenty-four) the zeal of pilgrimage prevailed beyond the example of former times, and the roads were covered with multitudes of either sex, and of every rank, who professed their contempt of life so soon as they should have kissed the tomb of their Redeemer. Princes and prelates abandoned the care of their dominions; and the numbers of these pious caravans were a prelude to the armies which marched in the ensuing age under the banner of the cross. About thirty years before the first crusade the archbishop of Mentz, with the bishops of Utrecht, Bamberg, and Ratisbon, undertook this laborious journey from the Rhine to the Jordan, and the multitude of their followers amounted to seven thousand persons." While the rustic but impetuous eloquence of Peter the hermit was exciting the multitudes of Italy and France to rescue the holy sepulcher from the custody of the followers of the false prophet, we find in the language of Gibbon that, "The magnanimous spirit of Gregory VII. had already

embraced the design of arming Europe against Asia. The ardor of his zeal and ambition still breathes in his epistles. From either side of the Alps fifty thousand Catholics had enlisted under the banner of St. Peter, and his successor reveals *his* intention of marching at their head against the impious sectaries of Mahomet. But the glory or reproach of executing—though not in person—this holy enterprise, was reserved for Urban II., the most faithful of his disciples. . . . The fifteenth of August (A. D. 1096) had been fixed, in the council of Clermont, for the departure of the pilgrims; but the day was anticipated by the thoughtless and needy crowd of plebeians; and I shall briefly dispatch the calamities which they inflicted and suffered, before I enter on the more serious and successful enterprise of the chiefs. Early in the spring, from the confines of France and Lorraine, above sixty thousand of the populace of both sexes flocked round the first missionary of the crusade, and pressed him with clamorous importunity to lead them to the holy sepulcher. The hermit, assuming the character, without the talents or authority of a general, impelled or obeyed the forward impulse of his votaries, along the banks of the Rhine and Danube The example and footsteps of Peter were closely pursued by another fanatic, the monk Godescal, whose sermons had swept away fifteen or twenty thousand peasants from the villages of Germany. Their rear was again pressed by a herd of two hundred thousand, the most stupid and savage refuse of the people, who mingled with their devotion a brutal license of rapine, prostitution, and drunkenness.” After the destruction of many thousands of Jews, in the cities of Verdun, Treves, Mentz, Spires, and Worms, and of vast numbers of citizens, by the desolating march of this unwieldy and licentious multitude through Hungary and Bulgaria, it is said of them by

Gibbon, that "Of the first crusaders, three hundred thousand had already perished before a single city was rescued from the infidels, before their graver and more noble brethren had completed the preparations of their enterprise. . . . The conquest of Asia was undertaken and achieved by Alexander, with thirty-five thousand Macedonians and Greeks; and his best hope was in the strength and discipline of his phalanx of infantry. The principal force of the crusaders consisted in their cavalry; and when that force was mustered in the plains of Bithynia, the knights and their martial attendants on horseback amounted to one hundred thousand fighting men, completely armed with the helmet and coat of mail. . . . A part of the infantry might be enrolled for the service of scouts, pioneers, and archers. But the promiscuous crowd were lost in their own disorder; and we depend not on the eyes or knowledge, but on the belief and fancy, of a chaplain of Count Baldwin, in the estimate of six hundred thousand pilgrims able to bear arms, besides the priests and monks, the women and children, of the Latin camp. The reader starts, and before he is recovered from his surprise I shall add, on the same testimony, that if all who took the cross had accomplished their vow, above SIX MILLIONS would have migrated from Europe to Asia. . . . The savage countries of Hungary and Bulgaria were whitened with their bones; their vanguard was cut in pieces by the Turkish Sultan; and the loss of the first adventure, by the sword, or climate, or fatigue, has already been stated at three hundred thousand men. . . . A small remnant of the pilgrims, who passed the Bosphorus, was permitted to visit the holy sepulcher. Their northern constitution was scorched by the rays, and infected by the vapors, of a Syrian sun. They consumed with heedless prodigality their stores of water and provision; their numbers exhausted the inland country; the sea was remote; the

Greeks were unfriendly; and the Christians of every sect fled before the voracious and cruel rapine of their brethren. In the dire necessity of famine, they sometimes roasted and devoured the flesh of their infant or adult captives. Among the Turks and Saracens, the idolaters of Europe were rendered more odious by the name and reputation of cannibals. The spies who introduced themselves into the kitchen of Bohemond, were shown several human bodies turning on the spit; and the artful Norman encouraged a report which increased at the same time the abhorrence and the terror of the infidels. . . . In a march of five hundred miles, the crusaders traversed the Lesser Asia, through a wasted land and deserted towns, without finding either a friend or an enemy. . . . As the pilgrims passed over a desert, where a draught of water is exchanged for silver, they were tormented by intolerable thirst; and on the banks of the first rivulet, their haste and intemperance were still more pernicious to the disorderly throng. . . . Two of their most respectable chiefs, the Duke of Lorraine and the Count of Toulouse, were carried in litters; Raymond was raised, as it is said, by a miracle, from a hopeless malady; and Godfrey had been torn by a bear, as he pursued that rough and perilous chase in the mountains of Pisidia. . . . Antioch must have still flourished as a great and populous capital. At the head of the Turkish emirs, Baghisian, a veteran chief, commanded in the place. His garrison was composed of six or seven thousand horse and fifteen or twenty thousand foot. One hundred thousand Moslems are said to have fallen by the sword; and their numbers were probably inferior to the Greeks, Armenians, and Syrians, who had been no more than fourteen years the slaves of the house of Seljuk. . . . In the first days of the siege and possession of Antioch, the Franks consumed with wanton and thoughtless prodigality the frugal subsistence of

weeks and months; the desolate country no longer yielded a supply; and from that country they were at length excluded by the arms of the besieging Turks. Disease, the fruitful companion of want, was envenomed by the rains of the winter, the summer heats, unwholesome food, and the close imprisonment of multitudes. The pictures of famine and pestilence are always the same, and always disgusting; and our imagination may suggest the nature of their sufferings and of their resources. The remains of treasure and spoil were eagerly lavished in the purchase of the vilest nourishment; and dreadful must have been the calamities of the poor, since, after paying three marks of silver for a goat, and fifteen for a lean camel, the Count of Flanders was reduced to beg a dinner, and Duke Godfrey to borrow a horse. Sixty thousand horse had been reviewed in the camp: before the end of the siege, they were diminished to two thousand; and scarcely two hundred fit for service could be mustered on the day of battle. . . . For their salvation and victory, they were indebted to the same fanaticism which had led them to the brink of ruin. In such a cause, and in such an army, visions, prophecies, and miracles, were frequent and familiar. In the distress of Antioch, they were repeated with unusual energy and success. St. Ambrose had assured a pious ecclesiastic, that two years of trial must precede the season of deliverance and grace; the deserters were stopped by the presence and reproaches of Christ himself; the dead had promised to arise and combat with their brethren; the Virgin had obtained the pardon of their sins; and their confidence was revived by a visible sign, the seasonable and splendid discovery of the HOLY LANCE. . . . Jerusalem has derived some reputation from the number and importance of her memorable sieges. . . . The time of the siege was indeed fulfilled in forty days, but they were forty days

of calamity and anguish. . . . On a Friday, at three in the afternoon, (the day and hour of the Passion,) Godfrey of Bouillon stood victorious on the walls of Jerusalem. . . . A bloody sacrifice was offered by his mistaken votaries to the God of the Christians. Resistance might provoke, but neither age nor sex could mollify their implacable rage. They indulged themselves three days in a promiscuous massacre; and the infection of the dead bodies produced an epidemical disease. After seventy thousand Moslems had been put to the sword, and the harmless Jews had been burnt in their synagogue, they could still reserve a multitude of captives, whom interest or lassitude persuaded them to spare."

The crusaders did not long maintain the advantages they had gained in Palestine, and over Jerusalem and the holy sepulcher; but, "In the twelfth century three great emigrations marched by land from the West to the relief of Palestine. The soldiers and pilgrims of Lombardy, France, and Germany, were excited by the example and success of the first crusade. Forty-eight years after the deliverance of the holy sepulcher, the emperor, and the French king, Conrad III. and Louis VII. undertook the second crusade to support the falling fortunes of the Latins. A grand division of the third crusade was led by the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, who sympathized with his brothers of France and England in the common loss of Jerusalem. These three expeditions may be compared in their resemblance of the greatness of numbers, their passage through the Greek empire, and the nature and event of their Turkish warfare, and a brief parallel may save the repetition of a tedious narrative. Of the swarms that so closely trod in the footsteps of the first pilgrims, the chiefs were equal in rank, though unequal in fame and merit, to Godfrey of Bonillon, and his fellow-adventurers. At their head were

displayed the banners of the Dukes of Burgundy, Bavaria, and Aquitaine; the first a descendant of Hugh Capet, the second, a father of the Brunswick line; the Archbishop of Milan, a temporal prince, transported, for the benefit of the Turks, the treasures and ornaments of his church and palace; and the veteran crusaders, Hugh the Great and Stephen of Chartres, returned to consummate their unfinished vow. The huge and disorderly bodies of their followers moved forward in two columns; and if the first consisted of 260,000 persons, the second might possibly amount to 60,000 horse and 100,000 foot. The armies of the second crusade might have claimed the conquest of Asia; the nobles of France and Germany were animated by the presence of their sovereigns; and both the rank and personal characters of Conrad and Louis gave a dignity to their cause, and a discipline to their force, which might be vainly expected from the feudatory chiefs. The cavalry of the emperor, and that of the king, was each composed of 70,000 knights, and their immediate attendants in the field; and if the light-armed troops, the peasant infantry, the women and children, the priests and monks, be rigorously excluded, the full account will scarcely be satisfied with 400,000 souls. The West, from Rome to Britain, was called into action; the kings of Poland and Bohemia obeyed the summons of Conrad; and it is affirmed by the Greeks and Latins that, in the passage of a strait or river, the Byzantine agents, after a tale of 900,000, desisted from the endless and formidable computation. In the third crusade, as the French and English preferred the navigation of the Mediterranean, the host of Frederic Barbarossa was less numerous. 15,000 knights, and as many squires, were the flower of the German chivalry; 60,000 horse and 100,000 foot, were mustered by the emperor in the plains of Hungary; and after such repetitions, we shall no longer be startled at the 600,000 pil-

grims which credulity has ascribed to this last emigration. . . . The enthusiasm of the first crusade is a natural and simple event, while hope was fresh, danger untried, and enterprise congenial to the spirit of the times. But the obstinate perseverance of Europe may indeed excite our pity and admiration; that no instruction should have been drawn from constant and adverse experience; that the same confidence should have repeatedly grown from the same failures; that six succeeding generations should have rushed headlong down the precipice that was open before them; and that men of every condition should have staked their public and private fortunes on the desperate adventure of possessing or recovering a tombstone two thousand miles from their country. In a period of two centuries after the council of Clermont, each spring and summer produced a new emigration of pilgrim warriors for the defense of the holy land; but the seven great armaments, or crusades, were excited by some impending or recent calamity; the nations were moved by the authority of their pontiffs, and the example of their kings; their zeal was kindled and their reason was silenced by the voice of their holy orators; and among these, Bernard, the monk, or the saint, may claim the most honorable place."

The scenes unfolded by the opening of the first four *seals*, represented respectively by the *white*, the *red*, the *black*, and the *pale horse*, develop the actual invasion and successful conquest of territories previously occupied by people entertaining very different views and principles from those entertained by the invaders, on the great subject of religion; and being invasions, and conquests, are well represented by the *horse*; the *first*, a pacific conquest, by the power of truth and righteousness, by the *white horse*; the *second*, a bloody conquest, by the power of the *sword*, by a *horse that was red*; the *third*, a gloomy conquest, by a resolutely deter-

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held :

mined effort to extinguish entirely the light of Christianity, by a *black horse* ; the *fourth*, a destructive conquest, by fanatical superstition, by a *pale horse* ; whereas, the developments of the two following *seals*, opened in this chapter, have reference to different views and principles, entertained by people of the same communities, and the effects produced by these principles ; consequently, the opening of these *seals*, is not heralded by the living creatures, or represented by the *horse*, and *him that sat thereon*. I only wish to add, in reference to this last, that the *pale horse* here stands in contrast with the *white horse* in the *first seal* ; and error, corruption, and *Death* here, stand in opposition to truth, purity, and *Life*, in the *first seal* ; and thus we see that this is one of the ways in which antichrist has long been accomplishing his work among men.

Verse 9 *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held* :—As in the slaying of victims in sacrifice, upon and before the altar, the blood—which God, in his word, assures us is the life thereof—is poured out upon, and runs down beneath, and about the altar, so *the souls*—the living, immortal principle—of those who have been sacrificed, or *slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held*, are herein represented as still being there, *under God's altar*, as living and swift witnesses against those by whom they *were slain*. The view here, seems to be thus extensive, comprehending all those who have in any way, or at any time been sacrificed to the cause of truth, and especially all martyrs in all ages. And this view is well confirmed and established by verse 11,

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

in which all these are admonished to *rest until their* list is made full and complete. And, in addition to this general view, we must observe that, the opening of this *seal* applies especially to that period in the history of the Christian world, in which the dark and bloody scenes of the inquisition occupy the foreground in this sad picture; and the persecution unto death, of all heretics, is a prominent and leading feature in the history of the times; and to deny, or even to question, any of the superstitious and idolatrous views, entertained and taught by the sovereign pontiff, or any other high dignitaries of the church, such as the worship of images and relics, the invocation of saints, the doctrine of transubstantiation, etc., was to be guilty of heresy. And that this prophecy is properly applied to this period, is so manifestly evident, that a limited number of quotations from history may suffice. But before we proceed to transcribe these, we will make a few notes on the other two verses of this seal.

Verse 10 *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*—The very solemn question in the language of this verse implies a petition made, and, as it were, already granted, except with regard to the time of its realization. There is also here a good confession, very devoutly made by these sincere *souls*, of their true and unwavering faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in these words: *O Lord, holy and true.* And to this there is a very prompt response, which seems to come to them as a reward for this faith—this good confession in the first words of the next verse.

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them ; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

Verse 11 *And white robes were given unto every one of them*;—And here may we not inquire, if the holy *souls* of these faithful martyrs were as pure before this as they now are, why were not these emblems of purity—these *white robes*—granted them sooner? The truth seems to be, that the endless progression of the redeemed *soul*, in purity, in knowledge, in bliss, in glory, in an ever-increasing capacity to glorify God in its ascent and approach toward the divine likeness, is eternal. *And it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*—This *rest* does not imply a cessation in this progression ; for, as we have already seen, this is now being promoted. It only means that they shall manifest no impatience, or solicitude, about the speedy award of justice upon their murderers. We take our first example of persecution by the tyrannical and corrupt authorities of the Roman church from the history of the Eastern empire—Gibbon's Rome, Chap. LIV. In speaking of the founder of a sect called Paulicians, he says: "The apostolic labors of Constantine Sylvanus soon multiplied the number of his disciples, the secret recompense of spiritual ambition. The remnant of the Gnostic sects, and especially the Manichæans of Armenia, were united under his standard ; many Catholics were converted or seduced by his arguments, and he preached with success in the regions of Pontus and Cappadocia, which had long since imbibed the religion of Zoroaster. . . . The feeble Michael I., and the rigid Leo the Armenian, were foremost in the race of persecution ; but

the prize must doubtless be adjudged to the sanguinary devotion of Theodora, who restored the images to the Oriental church. Her inquisitors explored the cities and mountains of the Lesser Asia, and the flatterers of the empress have affirmed that, in a short reign, 100,000 Paulicians were extirpated by the sword, the gibbet, or the flames. Her guilt or merit has perhaps been stretched beyond the measure of truth; but if the account be allowed, it must be presumed that many simple iconoclasts were punished under a more odious name; and that some who were driven from the church, unwillingly took refuge in the bosom of heresy. . . . The favor and success of the Paulicians in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, must be imputed to the strong, though secret discontent which armed the most pious Christians against the church of Rome. Her avarice was oppressive, her despotism odious; less degenerate perhaps than the Greeks in the worship of saints and images, her innovations were more rapid and scandalous; she had rigorously defined and imposed the doctrine of transubstantiation; the lives of the Latin clergy were more corrupt, and the Eastern bishops might pass for the successors of the apostles, if they were compared with the lordly prelates, who wielded by turns the crozier, the scepter, and the sword. . . . It was in the country of the Albigeois, in the southern provinces of France, that the Paulicians were most deeply implanted; and the same vicissitudes of martyrdom and revenge which had been displayed in the neighborhood of the Euphrates, were repeated in the thirteenth century on the banks of the Rhone. The laws of the Eastern emperors were revived by Frederic II. The insurgents of Tephrike were represented by the barons and cities of Languedoc; Pope Innocent III. surpassed the sanguinary fame of Theodora. It was in cruelty alone that her soldiers could equal the heroes of the crusades, and the cruelty of her priests was far excelled by

the founders of the Inquisition : an office more adapted to confirm, than to refute, the belief of an evil principle."

We now turn to the History of the Christian Church, by William Jones, Chapter V., section vi., p. 360. "The inquisitors, at first, had no tribunals; they merely inquired after heretics, their numbers, strength, and riches. When they had detected them, they informed the bishops, who at that time had the sole power of judging in ecclesiastical affairs, urging them to anathematize, banish, or otherwise chastise, such heretical persons as they brought before them. It is true, says Bishop Burnet, adverting to these times, the church pretended that she would shed no blood; but all this was insufferable juggling. For the churchmen declared who were heretics, and the secular arm was required to be always in readiness to execute their sentence. This was not only claimed by the bishops, but it was made a part of their oath at their consecration, 'that they should oppose and persecute heretics to the utmost of their power.' Nor were they contented to proceed by the common rules of justice, upon accusations and witnesses, but all forms were superseded, and by virtue of their pastoral authority, as if that had been given them to worry their sheep and not to feed them, they objected articles to their prisoners upon suspicion, requiring them to purge themselves of them by oath. And because bishops were not perhaps all equally zealous and cruel, that bloody man Dominic took this work to task, and his order has ever since furnished the world with a set of inquisitors, compared to whom all that had ever dealt in tortures in former times were mere bunglers. Sometimes they excited princes to arm their subjects against them, and at other times they inflamed the rabble, whom they themselves headed, to take up arms and unite in extirpating them. Such as they could prevail upon to devote themselves to this service, obtained the title of crusaders, and were distinguished

by a cross of cloth affixed to their garments. This badge operated like a charm upon the deluded populace, who, if they were inflamed before, now became infuriate, and as one happily expresses it, were raised to a super-celestial sort of virtue, which defies all the restraints of reason and humanity. Things remained pretty much in this state till about the year 1250; that is, for half a century. During this period, the efforts of the inquisitors were greatly assisted by the emperor of the Romans, Frederic II., who, in the year 1224, promulgated from Padua four edicts, against heretics, of the most ferocious and sanguinary description, addressed to his beloved princes, the venerable archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of the church; to the dukes, marquises, earls, barons, governors, judges, ministers, officials, and all other his faithful subjects throughout the empire. In these edicts he takes the inquisitors under his protection, imposes on obstinate heretics the punishment of being burnt to death, and of perpetual imprisonment on the penitent, committing the cognizance of the crime to the ecclesiastical, and the condemnation of the criminals, as well as the infliction of the punishment, to the secular judges. As the object of all these bloody edicts was chiefly to destroy the Waldenses or Albigenses, it may not be foreign to our purpose to give a specimen of the spirit that breathes throughout the whole of them: 'The care of the imperial government,' says his majesty, 'committed to us from heaven, and over which we preside, demands the material sword, which is given to us separately from the priesthood, against the enemies of the faith, and for the extirpation of heretical pravity—the wickedness of thinking differently from the church of Rome—that we should pursue with judgment and justice those vipers and perfidious children, who insult the Lord and his church, as though they would tear out the very bowels of their mother. We shall not suffer these wretches to live who infect the

world by their seducing doctrines, and who, being themselves corrupted, more grievously taint the flock of the faithful.' He then proceeds to pronounce the most dreadful sentence against all persons convicted of heresy, against all who may be employed as advocates for them, and against all who may be detected in receiving and abetting them, condemning their persons, disinheriting their children, and confiscating their property. After the death of Frederic, which happened about the middle of the century, pope Innocent IV., remaining sole arbiter of the affairs of Lombardy and other parts of Italy, set himself diligently to extirpate heresy, which of late had exceedingly increased; and considering the labor which had been employed in his service by the Franciscan and Dominican friars, whose zeal, unrestrained by either respect of persons or the fear of dangers, by any regard to justice or the feelings of humanity, had recommended them highly to the pontiff, he cheerfully availed himself of their ardor to second his efforts. Preaching was found of little avail, and even the enlisting of crusaders and inflicting military execution was suspended, for the sake of erecting in different countries standing tribunals armed with tremendous authority, but charged solely with the purgation of heretical pravity. Such was the footing on which 'the holy office' was placed in the year 1251, in the ecclesiastical states of Italy, which were under the pope's immediate inspection. It was afterward extended to more distant provinces, and everywhere intrusted to the management of Dominican friars. Thirty-one rules, or articles, defining their jurisdiction and powers, were devised; and all rulers and magistrates were commanded, by a papal bull, issued for the purpose, to give, under pain of excommunication, the most punctual obedience, and every possible assistance to this holy court. It should, however, be remarked, that the attempts which were made to intro-

duce the inquisition, did not prove equally successful in all Roman Catholic states, nor even in the greater part of them. In no country has the operation of this dreadful court of spiritual despotism been more strikingly exemplified than in Spain. The court of inquisition, which although it was not the parent, has been the nurse and guardian of ignorance and superstition in every kingdom into which it has been admitted, was introduced into Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella, and was principally intended to prevent the relapse of the Jews and Moors, who had been converted, or who pretended to be converted, to the faith of the church of Rome. Its jurisdiction, however, was not confined to the Jews and Moors, but extended to all those who in their practice or opinions differed from the established church. In the united kingdoms of Castile and Arragon, there were *eighteen different inquisitorial courts*, having each of them its counsellors, termed apostolical inquisitors; its secretaries, sergeants, and other officers; and besides these there were *twenty thousand familiars* dispersed throughout the kingdom, who acted as spies and informers, and were employed to apprehend all suspected persons, and commit them for trial to the prisons which belonged to the inquisition. By these familiars, persons were seized on bare suspicion, and, in contradiction to the established rules of equity, they were put to the torture, tried and condemned by the inquisitors, without being confronted, either with their accusers, or with the witnesses on whose evidence they were condemned. The punishments inflicted were more or less dreadful, according to the caprice and humor of the judges. The unhappy victims were either strangled, or committed to the flames, or loaded with chains and shut up in dungeons during life, their effects confiscated, and their families stigmatized with infamy. . . By this tribunal a visible change was wrought in the temper of the people, and reserve, dis-

trust, and jealousy, became the distinguishing characteristics of a Spaniard. Authors of undoubted credit affirm, and without the least exaggeration, that millions of persons have been ruined by this horrible court. Moors were banished, a million at a time. Six or eight hundred thousand Jews were driven away at once, and their immense riches seized by their accusers, and distributed among their persecutors, while thousands dissembled, and professed themselves Christians, only to be harassed in future. That honor to his country and of human nature, the late Mr. Howard, says, when he saw the inquisition at Valladolid, 'I could not but observe that even the sight of it struck terror into the common people as they passed.' 'It is styled,' he adds, 'by a monstrous abuse of words, the holy apostolic court of inquisition.' A simple narrative of the proceedings of the inquisition has shocked the world, and the cruelty of it has become proverbial. Nothing ever displayed so fully to the eyes of mankind the spirit and temper of the papal religion. 'Christians,' says Tertullian, 'were often called, not Christiani, but Chrestiani, from the gentleness of their manners, and the sweetness of their tempers. Jesus himself was the essence of mildness. His apostles were gentle, even as a nurse that cherisheth her children. But what an awful contrast is exhibited in this horrid court of papal inquisition.' Let us hear the description which Voltaire, a very competent witness, gives of it. 'Their form of proceeding,' says he, 'is an infallible way to destroy whomsoever the inquisitors wish. The prisoners are not confronted with the accuser or informer. Nor is there any informer or witness who is not listened to. A public convict, a notorious malefactor, an infamous person, a common prostitute, a child, are, in the holy office, though nowhere else, credible accusers and witnesses. Even the son may depose against his father, the wife against her husband.'

The wretched prisoner is no more made acquainted with his crime than with his accusers. His being told the one might possibly lead him to guess the other. To avoid this, he is compelled, by tedious confinement in a noisome dungeon, where he never sees a face but the jailer's, and is not permitted the use of either books, or pen and ink, or should confinement alone not be sufficient, he is compelled, by the most excruciating tortures, to inform against himself, to discover and confess the crime laid to his charge, of which he is often ignorant. 'This procedure,' says our historian, 'unheard of till the institution of this court, makes the whole kingdom tremble. Suspicion reigns in every breast. Friendship and quietness are at an end. The brother dreads his brother, the father his son. Hence taciturnity is become the characteristic of a nation, endued with all the vivacity natural to the inhabitants of a warm and fruitful climate. To this tribunal we must likewise impute that profound ignorance of sound philosophy in which Spain lies buried, whilst Germany, England, France, and even Italy, have discovered so many truths, and enlarged the sphere of our knowledge. Never is human nature so debased as where ignorance is armed with power.' But these melancholy effects of the inquisition are a trifle when compared with those public sacrifices, called *Autos-da-fe*, or Acts of faith, and to the shocking barbarities that precede them. A priest in a white surplice, or a monk who has vowed meekness and humility, causes his fellow-creatures to be put to the torture in a dismal dungeon. A stage is erected in the public market-place where the condemned prisoners are conducted to the stake, attended with a train of monks and religious confraternities. They sing psalms, say mass, and butcher mankind. Were a native of Asia to come to Madrid upon a day of an execution of this sort, it would be impossible for him to tell whether it were a rejoicing, a religious feast, a

sacrifice, or a massacre; and yet it is all this together! The king, whose presence alone in other cases is the harbinger of mercy, assists at this spectacle uncovered, seated lower than the inquisitors, and are spectators of their subjects expiring in the flames. The Spaniards reproached Montezuma with immolating his captives to his gods; what would he have said had he beheld an 'Auto da fe?' As the country of Toulouse was the principal place of rendezvous for the Albigenses, and as they abounded there in immense numbers, the pope evinced the utmost solicitude to prevail upon Count Raymond to expel them from his dominions. He also wrote Philip, king of France, reminding him that it was his duty to take arms against these heretics, and to use all his power to suppress them, that by thus laboring to stem the progress of heresy, he might purge himself from all suspicion of being tainted therewith in his own person. Twelve abbots of the Cistercian order, accompanied by the pope's legate, went preaching the cross against the Albigenses, and promising, by the authority of his holiness, a plenary remission of their sins, to all who took on them the crusade. The famous, or, more properly speaking, the infamous Dominic, the founder of the inquisition, joined himself to this association, and while engaged in this murderous expedition, he is said to have digested the plan of that iniquitous court. The efforts of Reinerius and his associates not answering the sanguine expectations of the pope, and the scheme of Dominic for establishing the inquisition being communicated to him, the latter, in the year 1216, transmitted letters patent, creating Dominic inquisitor-general, which was confirmed by the council of Lateran in the same year.' After watching for a time the operations of this commission, 'the pope was dissatisfied. The measures of Dominic and his adherents seemed to him but as the sprinkling of water, which only aggravated and extended the flame of

heresy. He therefore denounced open and more violent war; invited the catholic princes and nobles to take up arms, and commissioned his ministers to preach the same indulgences, and to offer terms of every kind, as advantageous as those that were granted when levies were made for crusading to Asia. The court of Rome, however, with a view to preserve at least the semblance of decency, thought it expedient, before proceeding to compulsory measures with the Albigenses, to try to reclaim them to the church by the more gentle and reasonable methods of persuasion, and the latter formed the resolution of defending their own principles. On the part of the latter, several pastors were appointed to manage the debate, of whom Arnold Hot was the principal. He arrived first at the appointed place. A bishop of the name of Eusus met him on behalf of the papacy, accompanied by the renowned Dominic, two of the pope's legates, and several other of the catholic clergy. The points which Arnold undertook to prove were, that the mass and transubstantiation are idolatrous and unscriptural—that the church of Rome is not the spouse of Christ—and that its polity is of a pernicious and wicked tendency. Arnold drew up certain propositions upon these points, which he transmitted to the bishop, who required fifteen days to answer them, which was granted. On the appointed day, the bishop appeared, and produced a large manuscript, which was read in the public assembly. Arnold requested that he might be permitted to reply by word of mouth, only entreating their patience if he took a considerable time in answering so prolix a writing and fair promises were made him of a patient hearing. He then discoursed for the space of four days upon the subject, with such fluency and readiness, such order, perspicuity, and forcible reasoning, that a strong impression was produced on the audience. Arnold, at length, called upon his opponents

to defend themselves. What they said on the occasion we are not informed, but the cause of the abrupt termination of the conference is a fact allowed on all hands, and may possibly suggest what was the real state of the controversy, for while the pope's legates were disputing with Arnold, the umpire of the papal party, the bishop of Villeneuve declared that nothing could be determined, because *the army of the crusaders was at hand*. What he asserted, alas, was but too true; the papal armies advanced, and by fire and fagot instantly decided all the points of controversy; and if we may place any reliance upon writers of unimpeachable veracity, 'the armies employed by Pope Innocent III., destroyed above two hundred thousand of them in the short space of a few months.' Arnold and his brethren might have been fully assured that it never was the intention of the pope to submit to any decision of the controversy by argument, which might happen to be unfavorable to his party. The acquiescence of his holiness in the proposal to discuss the differences between the parties in a public disputation, was in all probability, a mere maneuver, intended only to amuse the Albigenses and gain time, till the armies that were preparing, with a view to destroy them, might be in readiness. Platina, one of their own writers, in his *Life of Innocent XIII.*, seems to insinuate as much, when he tells us that 'there was need, not only of disputation, but of arms also; to such a pitch was the heresy grown.' The bull which the pope had already issued, in consequence of the death of Peter de Chatineau, had also made that sufficiently apparent. He had dispatched preachers throughout all Europe to collect an army which should revenge the blood of that man, promising paradise, and the remission of all their sins, to those who should bear arms forty days in that holy warfare; and after telling them that 'they were not to keep faith

with those who do not keep faith with God,' he thus proceeds: 'We exhort you, that you would endeavor to destroy the wicked heresy of the Albigenses, and do this with more rigor than you would toward the Saracens themselves; persecute them with a strong hand, deprive them of their lands and possessions, banish them and put Roman Catholics in their room.' RAYMOND, the sixth count of Toulouse, in whose territories the Albigenses chiefly abounded, still humanely extended to them his protection and patronage. Pope Innocent, by a bull, had excommunicated him as a favorer of heretics—he was prohibited the communion of holy things and of the faithful—all his subjects were absolved from their oath of allegiance, and power was dispensed to any Catholic man, not only to act against his person, but to seize his dominions, and dispossess him of them, under the pretext that by the prudence of the one, they might be effectually purged from heresy, as they had been grievously defiled by the wickedness of the other. . .

. . . . Under such patronage (Raymond's) their numbers (the Albigenses) rapidly increased, but it proportionally inflamed the indignation of the fierce and bloody inquisitors. While affairs remained in this critical posture, it unfortunately happened that Peter de Chatineau, one of the inquisitors, was assassinated, and Count Raymond was suspected of being, at least, privy to the murder. The Catholics loudly inveighed against the crime as of the deepest dye. The Count protested his innocence, affirming that he was in no respect guilty of the death of that friar—that he had been killed at St. Giles's by a certain gentleman whom Peter had pursued, and who immediately afterward retired to his friends at Beaucaire, that he had done every thing in his power to apprehend the manslayer, and in fine, that even were it true that he had been in any respect accessory to the murder, the ordinary course of justice ought to

be pursued and not to revenge it upon his subjects, who were innocent. To all this the Catholic party were deaf; Raymond was loaded with infamy, and with the highest censures of the church, and in a little time, an expedition of more than one hundred thousand cross-bearers (crusaders) was actually equipped against him. Raymond was justly alarmed; he offered to submit, promised obedience, and as a proof of his sincerity, delivered up into the hands of the pope seven fortified places in Provence. The immense army of crusaders, however, being now in motion, it was not to be reduced to a state of inactivity, because the Earl of Toulouse had effected his reconciliation with the see of Rome. On the contrary, they every-where attacked the Albigenses, took possession of the cities in which they were known to be, filled the streets with slaughter and blood, and committed to the flames numbers whom they had taken prisoners. When the army advanced toward the neighborhood of Beziers, the fate of the city was easily foreseen, and the nephew of Raymond, fully sensible that it could not be defended against an hundred thousand men, went out of the city, threw himself at the feet of the pope's legates and supplicated his mercy in favor of his capital, beseeching him not to involve the innocent with the guilty, which must be the case if Beziers were taken by storm—that there were many Roman Catholics in the city, who would be involved in one indiscriminate scene of ruin, contrary to the intentions of the pope, whose object was understood to be, solely the punishment of the Albigenses. Numerous other objects of entreaty were urged by the young prince, but the answer of the legate, to all he could plead was, that 'all his apologies and excuses would avail him nothing, and that he must do the best he could for himself.' Thus foiled in his object, the Earl of Beziers returned into the city, convened the inhabitants, to whom he ex-

plained the ill success that had attended his mission ; and particularly, that the only condition upon which pardon would be granted by the pope's legate was, that the Albigenses should abjure their religion, and promise to live according to the laws of the Roman church. . . . Finding the Albigenses inflexible, the Catholic party next sent their own bishop to the legate, to entreat him not to comprehend in the punishment of the Albigenses, those that had always been constant and uniform in their adherence to the church of Rome. In this interview the bishop explained to them that he was their prelate, that he knew them well ; and that as to the Albigenses, he did not think them so irrecoverable as to be past all hopes of repentance—that, on the contrary, he trusted a becoming mildness on the part of the church, which does not delight in blood, might yet reclaim them. The sanguinary ecclesiastic, however, was wholly deaf to the voice of humanity. Transported with rage, he gave vent to the most terrible threatenings, and swore that unless all who were in the city acknowledged their guilt, and submitted to the church of Rome, they should every individual be put to the sword, without regard to religious profession, age, or sex, giving instant orders for the city to be summoned to surrender at discretion. Under these circumstances resistance was vain ; the assailants were immediately in possession of it, and its inhabitants, to the number of 23,000, were indiscriminately massacred, and the city itself destroyed by fire. Cesarius informs us, that when the crusaders were about to enter the city, knowing that there were many Catholics mixed with the heretics, and hesitating how they should act in regard to the former, application was made to Arnold, the Abbe of Cîteaux, for advice, who instantly replied, ' Kill them all : the Lord knoweth them that are his.' The Earl of Beziers, foreseeing the ruin which threatened his capital,

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

made his escape, and withdrew to the neighboring city of Carcassone. This place was much more strongly fortified, both by nature and art, than Beziers, and consequently more defensible. The city, or upper town, stands upon a hill, surrounded by a double wall; the lower town, or borough, is in the plain, about two miles distant from the city. Numbers of the Albigenes resided there, and many more fled to it for security. In the meantime the army of the crusaders had been augmented by the arrival of fresh levies from every part of France, as well as from Italy and Germany, to upward of 300,000 men, (some writers make them 500,000,) and had advanced to the walls of the town, where they rushed furiously upon the first rampart, filling the ditch with fascines, and making themselves sure of an easy conquest of the place. But they met with so valiant a repulse, that the ground was covered with the dead bodies of the pilgrims (as they called themselves) round about the city. The following day the legate ordered the scaling ladders to be applied, and a general assault to be made on the town, but the inhabitants made a resolute defense. They were, however, at length overpowered with numbers, and beat back from the walls, when the enemy entered and gave the inhabitants of the borough much the same treatment they had lately done to those of Beziers, putting them all to the sword." It is, certainly, a very abrupt termination to discontinue this narration here, for we are still, as it were, upon the threshold of this subject, and have not given a moiety of these bloody scenes; but the reader must be referred to the ponderous volumes, written expressly on the subject of martyrdom.

Verse 12 - *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal,*

and, lo, there was a great earthquake;—The opening of the *sixth seal* presents a very brief but exceedingly graphic view of a period of time, perhaps much more extensive than any of the preceding ones. The scenes in the developments of this *seal*, which have had their fulfillment, may be applied to their corresponding history; but the unfulfilled part of it can only be compared with portions of the prophecy more fully representing the same things. *An earthquake*, in this prophecy, most unquestionably represents a revolution, or a series of revolutions. And the *mountains and islands* of verse 14, which *were moved out of their places*, are long afterward to be destroyed, as in chap xvi. 20, where St John saw in the vision that *every island fled away, and the mountains were not found*. And as we shall hereafter see, these *mountains and islands* represent pagan, and corrupt Christian governments. And the great, stirring movement against these, especially against the *islands*, seems to have commenced in earnest about the middle of the eighteenth century, caused by the solicitude of the people to enjoy political and religious liberty. But the populace, having been long oppressed and degraded by bad government, and corrupted and almost totally blinded to the light of truth by error and corruption in religion, especially in the Roman Catholic governments, made the sad mistake, in grasping at liberty, of running into anarchy; and so, also, instead of correcting the errors which had so much deformed and so vilely corrupted religion, they rejected religion itself; one of the most fearful results of which was the French revolution, the reign of terror. Though infidelity has existed, and been doing its work, ever since an unbelieving Cain slew his believing brother Abel, yet it never had presented so bold a front, or spoken out so insolently, in the very face of Deity. A nation, for the first time in the world's history, saying, There is no God! So that it is not at all surprising

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind ;

that prophetic figures should labor, as they evidently do here, in describing this reign of terror, in connection with the cause which produced it. *The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood ;—The sun became black*—the luminary, the light of heaven, the light of truth, became darkness. The light of the church being thus obscured, clothed her in the deepest mourning, as in sackcloth of hair—the coarsest and most uncomfortable apparel, worn by the most self-sacrificing penitents. Could the darkness, the deplorable ignorance, the vile corruption, the shocking infidelity of the church, be more strongly marked by one single figure? *And the moon became as blood ;—*That dispensation and age of the world which received its light from the promise of Him that should come, who is the light of the world, the Sun of righteousness, and reflected its light thus received, by the adumbrations of its bleeding victims, pointing to the great sacrifice for sin. But this, the true light, which should have been clear and bright, being so darkened by infidelity, that the great body, professedly the church of Christ, instead of purifying, is actually corrupting the world, so that the great and gloriously benevolent design of all sacrifice is in this way and to this fearful extent perverted, it becomes blood-guiltiness before God. For as to sacrifice in vain is to commit sin, so to pervert the great atonement is to crucify Christ afresh. Moreover, there was much blood poured out during this reign of terror, attributable more, perhaps, to infidelity than to all other causes combined.

Verse 13 *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a*

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

mighty wind;—*The stars of heaven*, the ministers, the leading officers, the high dignitaries of the church, shaken from their high positions in the church by these fearful convulsions, these mighty revolutions, this *great earthquake*, *fell unto the earth*, took their positions in governments of the world. How exceedingly blind and inconsistent is man, when he forsakes God, and leans to his own understanding. Where is the prospect, or even the ground of hope, for greater tranquillity or security in the midst of these convulsions in governments than in this darkness in the church? The truth is, united and blended as their interests are, the only chance for the safety of either is the reformation of both. Did the world ever witness a more striking fulfillment of prophecy than this falling of stars?

Verse 14 *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together*;—The great body of the Christian church, in its catholic, or general form, as it has existed for so many centuries, the national religion of the Roman, the Eastern, and the German empires, the kingdom of France, and of other countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa, has at last become so fearfully dark, so horribly bloody and corrupt, that the incensed Deity here reverses the scene; and, instead of farther unrolling and presenting it to view, rolls it up as a *scroll*, and casts it from him. Not that the Christian church is to become extinct in the world, but that he will have these infidels, in and out of the church, to know that there is a God upon the throne of universal empire. And why shall he not now do as he has ever done? When the people of his choice, the church or churches, the nation or nations, whom he hath blessed have become so corrupt and corrupt-

15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains ;

ing that endurance itself can endure no longer, why shall he not cast the vile thing from him, and raise up unto himself a people worthy of the Christian name? These are, indeed, stirring, moving times, for we find that not a solitary government, whether in the bosom of this rejected church, (the islands,) or outside of it, (the mountains,) is exempt from the general shock, the universal convulsion. *For every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Mountains and islands* unquestionably represent governments, especially strong governments.

Verse 15 *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men,—* We have here enumerated several of the leading classes of men upon whom rests the responsibility of wielding society; and these seem to represent all who govern. *Kings* being recognized as a leading class of rulers in governments; *great men*—greatness of soul and of intellect certainly do much in government, even though the large majority of men of this stamp occupy private stations; *rich men*—a very considerable influence is certainly exerted by capitalists upon society, and even upon governments; *chief captains*—in the hands of commanders of military enterprises sometimes rests the destinies of society, and of nations; and *mighty men*—*might* sometimes turns the scale of destiny with men and things, regardless of *right*. *And every bond man, and every free man*—these two general classes represent all the governed, so that we have here represented the whole of human society. And the universal conviction seems to be, at least the conviction among all classes of men seems to be, that they have sinned, and the impulse is to make an

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb :

17 For the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?

effort to escape its consequences. And, seeing the fearful calamities and judgments that rest upon the church, they make the dangerous mistake that the *stars*, or ministers, have done before them, and attempt to find refuge in the shaking, breaking, and falling *rocks* and *mountains*, or governments, and *hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains*.

Verse 16 *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb* :—It is a very dangerous mistake to suppose that governments, when the great and benevolent design of their establishment is perverted by abuse and corruption, are not subject to the chastisements, and to the control, and even to the disposal of Divine Providence, as well as the church when so corrupted that her influence for good is destroyed. And if they did not anticipate safety and security in taking refuge thus, they seem evidently to have expected—vain and foolish as the expectation is—concealment *from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*.

Verse 17 *For the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?*—It is but reasonable and right that the acknowledgment, not only of the existence, but also of the just judgments of God, should be as public and as general as the profession of infidelity had been. When pacific remedies have utterly failed, the amputation, painful as it is, of the diseased and contaminating limb, becomes a kind work of the strong nerve of the surgeon, to save the rest of the body from infection, disease, and death. So the casting

off of a church and people, so rebellious and so polluted that neither mercies nor warnings could reach them, and the shaking to their very foundations the obstinately unbelieving and corrupt nations which nothing else could move to a sense of their condition or interests, became a strangely (but not the less truly) merciful work of Providence for man in these two great leading and most important interests of society, that could be accomplished in no other way. Though the moving of the *mountains and islands out of their places* is only the beginning of a work, as we have seen, which is to be fully accomplished in the ages which are yet to come, yet, *the great day of his wrath*, in this seventeenth verse, may be a reference in anticipation to the destruction of *Babylon*, and of the governments which adhere to her interests, so fully described in the prophecy hereafter.

CHAPTER VII.

3 *An angel sealeth the servants of God in their foreheads.* 4 *The number of them that were sealed: of the tribes of Israel a certain number.* 9 *Of all other nations an innumerable multitude, which stand before the throne, clad in white robes, and with palms in their hands.* 14 *Their robes were washed in the blood of the Lamb.*

AND after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor any tree.

NOTES.—CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1 *And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth,*—After having passed through so many heart-rending and soul-sickening scenes, we have the precious

assurance here, that we shall enjoy a season of comparative tranquillity and peace; and what is still better, that the knowledge of the truth shall be greatly advanced during this season of repose from convulsions and revolutions. These *four angels*, as if satiated, wearied, exhausted, with the work of death—of destruction, have taken a *stand*, and become comparatively inactive. These four messengers of destruction have been long actively employed; the first, in the extension of empire, by the power of the sword, as in the developement of the *second seal*; the second, in the establishment of a new religion, by the destruction of Paganism and Christianity together, the pretensions of which was nothing less than the conquest of the world, politically and religiously, as in the developments of the *third seal*; the third, in the establishment of a religious despotism, by exciting enthusiastical superstition, and keeping the populace in ignorance, as in the developments of the *fourth* and *fifth seals*; and the fourth, in the substitution of human reason for revelation, denying the authority and providence of God over man, and thus darkening the counsels of both heaven and earth, as in the developments of the *sixth seal*. As we have seen, these *angels* have *power*, and have exercised it; and the fact of its partial suspension here, shows that it is not yet destroyed. War, for the sake of empire, has not ceased to be renewed no more. Mohammedanism is not dead, but only slumbers. The papal power is not repudiated, but merely checked. Infidelity is not extinct in the world, though the wound it has brought upon itself is a sore one. The controlling of these great powers, *causing* that these fickle *winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree*, is truly, and wonderfully providential. *Earth*, here, seems to represent governments; and the *sea*, the corrupt church of this age; and *trees*, most certainly, represent men in authority in governments generally.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Verse 2 *And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God*,—This angel is, doubtless, the messenger of truth, and this *seal of the living God* is, most certainly, *the truth of the living God*. The general course of the grand march of man and of mind, of civilization and of good government, of the sciences and of the arts, as well as of *the truth of the living God*, has always been *from the east* to westward. And this angel, this messenger of truth, *cried with a loud voice*, such a voice as nothing but the power of truth can utter, *to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea*.

Verse 3 *Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads*.—This command, or entreaty, from the *voice* of truth, addressed to the highest authorities, presiding over the best interests of society, certainly was more effectual, being of Divine authority, in accomplishing the thing whereunto it was sent, than it had ever before been in all the world's history; for all manner of truths prevailed, and were understood, and blessed society, during this season of comparative repose, as they had never done before. The truths or facts of nature developed by the faithful, and the successful cultivation of the sciences and of the arts in the numerous discoveries, inventions, and improvements to promote the physical, intellectual, and social well-being of society, as well as *the truth of the living God* in the revelation of his will to man, sent forth and diffused abroad, accompanied by

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed; *and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

a living ministry, and by numerous good religious books, to secure the spiritual and eternal interests of man throughout all the ramifications of society. But just here, we may learn—if we have never learned it before—that it is only those who receive the truth in the love of it, and of its Author, for its own sake and the glory of God, and obey its precepts in righteousness, that shall be thus *sealed*; for it is only *the servants of our God*, says this *angel*, or messenger of truth and righteousness, who are *sealed in their foreheads*. This widely extensive and wonderfully successful communication of the knowledge of the truth elevates the intellectual and moral man to a clearer and more correct knowledge of his Author, so that the faith of the believer the more readily takes hold of its object. Some of the benevolent institutions of Christianity which have since so greatly blessed the world, were already operating to some extent; but this suspension of hostilities, so favorable to their work, seemed to inspire fresh hopes and new life into all their operations; and Bible, missionary, and tract societies, sent out and spread abroad an influence and power never before realized. Reformations and revivals were wonderfully successful—not the least of which was the great revival of 1800 in the Western world, which so greatly blessed Kentucky, Tennessee, and other States of this country; the fruits and great results of which can never be fully understood and appreciated in time.

Verse 4 *And I heard the number of them which were sealed*:—The scene is here evidently reversed from the prospective to a retrospective view. That is, instead of enumerating the number of them to be *sealed*, as the work pro-

gresses in the future, which would be fixing and determining beforehand the success of a work suspended upon man's agency, *the Lamb* inspires the apostle to look upon the record *on the back side of the book*, and to read the number *sealed* from the beginning of man's history until the opening of the Christian age, as well as the *innumerable multitude* who, without the clear light of revealed truth, have been saved by following the light that was in them. The error of considering these numbers applicable to the Christian instead of former dispensations or ages, seems to have been caused by the insertion of connectives, which our translators deemed necessary to complete the grammatical construction in English, many of which are entirely wanting in the original, or from the difference in the genius of the Greek and the English, are unnecessary in the former. But, though there is an evident want of connection without the supplied words, in our language, yet the sense is not only clear, but even impressive, when they are omitted, and proper points used in lieu of them. Thus: *And I heard the number of them which were sealed: Sealed: A hundred, forty, four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.* The sense of the original text should be strictly guarded, especially by translators, who should not yield too much to the peculiar genius of any language. We think we have sufficient reason from Scripture style—especially that of prophecy—as well as from numerous examples and allusions, to believe that this definite and numerically corresponding number with those which follow, being the square of the number of tribes, represents an indefinite number. But, we should always remember, that in examples like this, the real number is never less than that by which it is represented. Moreover, the latitude of meaning here most certainly includes all those, who in all ages, preceding the Christian, were taught the truth of God's revealed will to man; and

5 Of the tribe of *Juda were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Reuben were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Gad were sealed twelve thousand*.

6 Of the tribe of *Aser were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Manasses were sealed twelve thousand*.

7 Of the tribe of *Simeon were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Levi were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Issachar were sealed twelve thousand*.

8 Of the tribe of *Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Joseph were sealed twelve thousand*. Of the tribe of *Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand*.

who believed with hearts unto righteousness, and continued firm, being represented by that nation to whom God committed that precious treasure for themselves, and in trust for all the world beside.

Verse 5 *Of the tribe of Juda, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad, sealed, twelve thousand.*

Verse 6 *Of the tribe of Aser, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses, sealed, twelve thousand.*

Verse 7 *Of the tribe of Simeon, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar, sealed, twelve thousand.*

Verse 8 *Of the tribe of Zabulon, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph, sealed, twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin, sealed, twelve thousand.*—That these definite numbers all represent indefinite ones is almost infallibly certain, for who can suppose, that precisely the same number believed, out of each tribe; especially, when we remember that no enumeration at all is made of the idolatrous tribes of Ephraim and Dan. We find that what we have previously said of this *seal of the living God* being a knowledge of the truth of God, is strongly corroborated here, because,

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

a number—not all—of those who had the word of God,—the means of obtaining this knowledge—were *sealed*. It is truly important here to note, that, though this record is found *upon the back side of the book*, it was as much impossible for St. John to have read it, without inspiration of God, as that within the *seals*, before they were *opened* by the *Lamb*. But he was, if possible, still more dependent upon divine light, emanating from God, directly, to see the record of the ninth verse.

Verse 9 *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,—* Having enjoyed a view of the numbers *sealed*, even before the revealments of God's truth were finished and complete, and while the sealing is going on, in a ratio much increased by the light of the Christian age, St. John here saw, with apparent rapture, coming up from all heathendom, an *innumerable multitude*, out of *all unchristianized nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues*, of all past ages, who, though they had not enjoyed the glorious revealments of the true light; yet, by faithfully following the light that was in them, had entered into life. It may be very properly noted here, that there is nothing said in this place of this *innumerable multitude* being *sealed*; nor was it possible that they should have been *sealed*, not having even heard the promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; nor any other of the gracious promises of scripture, that Christ should come and redeem his people. *Their robes*, however, were *washed and made pure and white, in the blood*

of the *Lamb* ; but when ? It was not by faith in Christ, while as yet they had not heard of him ; for how could they have believed in him of whom they had never heard ? for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God ; nor yet, by calling upon his name, for how could they have called on him in whom they had not believed ? But as St. Paul tells us, Those who have not the written law, are a law unto themselves ; their consciences being the rule of determining moral actions, or as we have said, by faithfully following the light that was in them, and doing the very best they knew ; whatever else was necessary being done for them, without condition upon their part, as in the case of idiots. Thus, nothing that is impossible being required of any, and yet, salvation being attainable only by the blood of the *Lamb*. And these were all prepared to *stand before the throne, and before the Lamb*, being pure, *clothed with white robes and palms in their hands*. Certainly, it would be doing no violence to this text, nor to the tenor of scripture on this subject, to admit that this *innumerable multitude washed their robes*, the emblems of their purity, by ascribing their salvation unto God and the *Lamb*, after they saw and knew the Lord. And in fact, there seems to be no other conceivable way in which they can be said—as in verse fourteenth of this chapter—to *have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. And certainly, all idiots will be able to do the same thing ; their idiocy being, not a defect in their spiritual constitution, but in their physical organism ; in consequence of which, their intellectual and moral powers are not developed until after they are freed from the imperfect body. And a like incapacity because of the imperfect development of the body is the state of all who die in infancy until after death. But all these will certainly be *clad in white robes*, and sing a song of praise and salvation to *God and the Lamb*. And all this is noth-

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

ing more than we have already seen, in the case of the martyrs, at the opening of the fifth seal, who had *white robes given unto every one of them*. Thus associating these different cases together, and the language of scripture connected with them, only serves to make this most gloriously interesting subject more clear and satisfactory to all who love and glorify God and the Lamb.

Verse 10 *And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God*—This *loud voice* of glorious praise bursts forth here from this vast *multitude* perhaps for the first time, because, as it seems, they upon their arrival at home, have just learned from whom their salvation cometh. And the note is in unison with that of Israel's host just enumerated as *sealed* through faith. *Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb*. And why may we not believe that these shall then and there learn to know God and the means of their salvation?—a knowledge high and glorious compared with any thing they had learned in this life. And shall not we, who have a tolerably just knowledge of God, and the plan of redemption here, know more of his glorious nature and of this redemption and salvation then and there?

Verse 11 *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the elders and the four beasts*,—The supplying of the little word, *about*, here esteemed a necessary connective by our translators, is most certainly unfortunate, the meaning being not only obscured, but actually changed by it; for the angels certainly did not stand *about the elders and the four beasts*, (see chap. v. 11,) but all these together

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

stood about the throne; nor did the angels only fall before the throne, and worship God, but this was the delightful service of all. These angels may be those pure spirits before God, who never were tenants of mortal bodies, but they more probably are all the messengers of God's mercy and grace to man; the elders, the principal ones among them, and the four beasts representing all ages and all time. And these all, with one consent, with perfect unanimity, fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.

Verse 12 *Saying, Amen*.—This seems to be the fervently approving response of all the ministers of truth and righteousness of all ages, with their leaders, or ministers highest in authority, the *elders* among them, to the praises offered *unto God and the Lamb* by the *innumerable multitude* who had not been *sealed*, but who were, nevertheless, *clad in white robes*, bearing *palms in their hands*, (see the notes on 9th verse.) And they utter seven emphatic forms of expression as in praise, celebrating the name of *him that sitteth upon the throne*, (see the same expressions, the language of the same adoring ones in chap. v. 12, and note there.) And now these adoring ones, after repeating this septenary form of praise here, the very numbers of which denote perfection, add that it is and shall be ascribed *unto our God for ever and ever*. And again, they exclaim, *Amen*.

Verse 13 *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me*;—After this Hebraism *answered*, for spake, one of the elders proceeds to ask the following twofold question: *What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence*

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

came they? And after the modest reply of St. John, gives the answer in the following verse.

Verse 14 *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.*—St. John either does not know, with absolute certainty, the proper answer to this very important inquiry, or more probably he sees and feels the propriety of his being the catechumen, rather than the instructor of the sainted *elder*, before the throne of God. So he modestly declines answering, by saying: *Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation.* If we have not misunderstood and misconstrued this chapter almost entirely, especially from the ninth verse to this place, these *white-robed*, sainted ones, are the redeemed and saved from all heathendom. And that all honest Pagans who were ardently desirous to know the truth, as to the proper object of religious worship, and to meet all moral obligations, were, without a revelation from God, in the midst of *great tribulation*, wants no argument to prove—surrounded as they were by darkness impenetrable, upon the subject of divine things, especially divine truth, and subject to the influence of such an incredible amount of superstition. But not being satisfied with the worship of idols, they worshiped, they knew not what; yet they worshiped; and as in sincerity they worshiped, though without a correct knowledge of the true God, yet their devotions were acceptable unto him, because they were offered in accordance with the best lights they had or could obtain. And as there is salvation in none but Jesus Christ, *their robes* were cleansed in the atoning *blood of the Lamb*; not, however, by faith in him, before they had heard of him; for how could they have believed

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne

in him of whom they had not heard? nor yet by calling upon his name; for how could they have called on him in whom they had not believed? So that we see they are not sealed, but *have* (nevertheless) *washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Verse 15 *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple:*—Because they are washed, because they are purified, *are they before the throne of God, and serve him perpetually in his temple;* and though, in the world, they had *great tribulation*, and dwelt in the midst of fearful superstition, among idolaters, now, *he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*

Verse 16 *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;*—The best heathens who ever lived and wrote, have left testimony, clear and touching, that they hungered and thirsted exceedingly for the bread of life and the waters of salvation; but this is all over with them now, having reached the source, the fountain of perpetual, of eternal supplies. And having been judged and accepted according to that which they had, and not according to what they had not, they shall never be subject to the scrutinizing test applicable to those who have enjoyed the glorious light of the full-orbed *sun* of eternal truth, nor shall they pass through the crucible that shall try those who have been urged to accept deliverance, but have rejected the light and chose darkness. *For, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*

Verse 17 *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the*

shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.—These purified, *white-robed* saints, having escaped from an association with superstitious idolaters, in the midst of pagan darkness; and being now safely at home in the temple, *before the throne of God*; where he that *sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them*, so that *they shall neither hunger, nor thirst any more*, as they did in heathendom, *for the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne*, consequently God over all, and blessed for evermore, *shall feed them*, with a perfectly correct knowledge of himself; for, being in union and communion with him, this knowledge shall be perfect in its kind, and shall be a perpetual, an eternal feast for their satisfied souls; and in the midst of the bright and brightening glories of the temple and the *throne, shall lead them unto living fountains of waters*; multitudes of believing souls, constantly flowing into the paradise of God, whom they shall recognize as fellow-servants, who with them shall learn to know God, and his works, especially themselves, and God's gracious purposes and providence in bringing them to glory, honor, immortality, eternal life. And the perpetuity, the eternity of this flow, of this knowledge and bliss, is perfectly sure and true; for it tends toward a knowledge of the nature, and gracious purposes, and glorious works and ways of God, which are inexhaustible, which are INFINITE. (See note on chap. vi. 11.) There are many things which cause men to weep, and there are almost-innumerable degrees of anguish; but nothing can wring from the anxious soul, or streaming eyes, such *tears of anguish*, as a deeply-felt want of the knowledge and

peace of God in the longing soul; and these having felt this want in its most aggravated form, but now, being relieved by the presence, and knowledge, and glory of God, how very appropriately has the apostle said, in concluding this subject, *and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes!*

CHAPTER VIII.

- 1 *At the opening of the seventh seal,* 2 *Seven angels had seven trumpets given them.* 3 *Another angel putteth incense to the prayers of the saints on the golden altar.* 6 *Four of them sound their trumpets, and great plagues follow.*

AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

NOTES.—CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1 *And when he had opened the seventh seal,—He,* who opened this seal, is the same who opened all the rest; for St. John saw, *when the Lamb opened the first seal,* and the pronoun, at the opening of all the others, refers to *the Lamb.* And when *no man was found able to open the book, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.* And Jesus Christ says, *I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.* So that we see: *The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Lamb of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,* are identical. The opening, and the developments in detail, of *the seventh seal,* perfects, or finishes this work. And the very number of the seal denotes perfection. But the developments of this opening seal are extensive; including the *sounding of the trumpets,* and the

pouring out of the vials of wrath; and, as the *trumpets*, and the *vials*, complete the development of scenes, the grand outline of which has been presented by the opening of *six seals*, occupying a period of about seventeen centuries; and now, the opening and the developments of this *seal*, by the emblems of *silence in heaven*, the *angel which stood at the altar*, the sounding of five *trumpets*, and part of the scenes of the sixth, serve extensively in filling up the picture already before us; many scenes to which will be added, by the *pouring out* of some of the *vials*, and many other emblems in chap. vii., after the first three verses, already noted, and in chapters x., xi., xii., xiii., xiv., xv.; after which the view will be extended through periods of vast extent; one of which is, perhaps, 360,000 years. Some of the emblems yet to be explained add clearness to scenes already presented, while others present new ones to fill up the grand picture. The opening and the developments of this *seal* constitute a general, a universal review, completing the work of development, from the commencement of the *first seal's* revealments, the commencement of the Christian era, until the pouring out of the *last vial into the air*, the vital element for man; when a *great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, says, It is done*. So that, settling thus conclusively the period of time when this *seal* began to be opened, we may, perhaps, the more clearly understand the following: *There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour*. This *silence in heaven*, or in the church, seems to be a cessation of the *voice* of instruction and warning, which had been so faithfully kept up in the church of God for so many ages, by patriarchs, priests, and prophets, and recently by Jesus Christ himself, and by his apostles, and other disciples. And that which produced the shock which caused this *silence*, was certainly sufficient to cause that both earth and heaven should stand in awe—the cruci-

2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

fixion of the Lord of life and glory. After which, it was certainly not inappropriate, or unbecoming, that man should wait and listen for the *voice* of him, who spake from Mount Sinai, that the divine will might be known and obeyed. The period of time from the crucifixion until the disciples were fully and clearly convinced of his resurrection, on the second Sabbath after he was crucified, when the disciples, Thomas being with them, were assembled; and Jesus appeared in their midst, and removed the last doubt of his having risen from their minds, was about seven days and a half, perhaps a few hours more. And half an hour—prophetic time—is seven days and a half. And now, if we are still inclined to doubt whether this is the period of *silence*, as above, to observe as we proceed, the appropriate work of *the angels which stood before God*, and of *another angel, which came and stood at the altar*, our doubts may be removed.

Verse 2 *And I saw the seven angels which stood before God*;—These *seven angels*, or messengers, beyond all question, represent all the true and faithful ministers of truth and righteousness, called of God, as was Aaron in a former age, commissioned, and sent forth, ambassadors for Christ. And all of them, for all the long ages of the Christian era, now past and to come, are represented by the definite little number seven, denoting perfection, or completeness. And these all are *before* and among men, in the midst of society, to woo and win souls to Christ; and they also *stand before God*, responsible for the faithful performance of the great and holy work to which they are called. All these are armed, not with the sword, as the followers of Mohammed, to enforce obedience to the requirements announced, but

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

with the *trumpet*, to sound an alarm, to warn, to call to action in the divine service. *And to them were given seven trumpets.*

Verse 3 *And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer;—*In compliance with the promise made by Jesus Christ to his disciples, while he was yet present with them, when he went away, he sent the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to abide with them. And as the ministers *stood before God*, he *stood at the altar, the golden altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense.* O, the delightful odor of the profuse and precious offering—the atoning blood, poured out by the Son, and presented unto the Father by the Holy Spirit, as *incense, much incense, with the prayers* of the adopted heirs of heaven, of God, the *saints, all saints, upon the golden altar which was before the throne.* *And there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*

Verse 4 *And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.*—The allusion here to the burning of odoriferous spices, so grateful to the olfactories, seems to be designed to represent this offering, presented by the Divine Spirit, in connection with the prayers of God's people, as not only acceptable and well-pleasing in his sight, but also as being exceedingly grateful unto him, coming as they do from the Son of his love, and from his people whom he hath loved with

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

an everlasting love, and all presented by the Spirit of all grace.

Verse 5 *And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth*:—The allusions to the forms of worship in the past age are still kept up; but all these are spirit and power now, the shadows having passed away. This divine *fire*, brought by the Holy Spirit himself *from the pure and holy altar before the throne of God*, and *cast into the earth*, must needs produce a sensation. And now that all this—the calling, commissioning, endowing, and sending forth of a living and pure ministry, to propagate the pure principles of truth and righteousness, and the promise, descent, influence, and power of the Holy Spirit, in the accomplishment of this great work, applies to the introduction of Christianity into the world by Jesus Christ and his apostles, will hardly be questioned. And when Pentecost was fully come, *There were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake*. The allusion here—as well as in the fifth verse of the fourth chapter—to the scenes on Mount Sinai at the giving of the law is clearly manifest, with this difference: That was the manifestation of the divine glory to a people taught to believe that there is only one living and true God, interdicting all idolatry, and enjoining faithfulness; whereas, this is the vindication of the divine cause, the divine name, and the divine worship, against paganism, ignorance of the divine existence, the divine nature, and against infidelity to the divine cause. And these discordant elements, truth and error, coming in conflict, the inevitable consequence is, explosions, *lightnings and thunderings*. And the *voices* of

6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

instruction, teaching and vindicating the claims of divine truth and the divine honor succeeding against paganism, against error, as they did in the Roman empire in the first centuries of the Christian era: the result was *an earthquake*, a revolution, the fall of paganism, and the establishment of Christianity. But more on this subject when the angels begin to sound. Thus far, a preface or introduction to the opening of *the seventh seal*. The period specially represented by this *angel standing at the altar* is evidently that of the extraordinary gifts and power of the Holy Ghost granted unto the world in the wisdom of God, as the most efficient means of establishing the truth and divinity of the Christian religion, to settle and establish the minds of men then living, and with it, *the book of this prophecy* and other prophecies, for all the generations following.

Verse 6 *And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*—Some professed ministers of the gospel talk presumptuously of being *prepared* for their work by God himself, without any condition upon their part. They say, God never calls a man to this work without qualifying him for it. It is true, that the disciples, on the day of Pentecost, were enabled by direct and immediate inspiration to speak to the people in as many languages as were necessary on the occasion; but no one pretends to such inspiration now. But ministers acquire language, as well as every other kind of knowledge, just like other men. And if any man in the accomplishment of his work *before God* and among men requires to know every thing, it is the minister of God's truth to man. We must remember that the *trumpets* were given to these seven angels in the second verse, immediately after which comes in the account of the

7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

other angel which stood at the altar, his extraordinary works, and the overwhelmingly powerful results—*voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake*. For these *angels*, messengers, or ministers, were instructed by Jesus Christ himself, even when they were under arrest, and brought before rulers, and kings, not to premeditate what they should say, promising that it should be given them in the same hour what they ought to say; and he also gave them power over serpents and deadly poison, that they should take up the one and drink the other, with impunity; and also power to heal the sick, so that upon whomsoever they should lay hands, he should recover. All these promises and extraordinary influences are peculiarly and exclusively applicable to the peculiar administration of *the angel which stood at the altar*. And under such an administration, it is certainly not marvelous that there was a revolution. But now when the object contemplated in these things is accomplished, the minister is thrown more upon his own resources. *And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound*.

Verse 7 *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth*:—The first angel most certainly represents all the ministers of God's truth to man in the first ages of Christianity. And although there was occasionally some little sharpness manifested among them, growing out of some difference of opinion on some minor points, yet their teachings on all the cardinal truths involved in their great commission were so harmonious, and the spirit of love and union by which they were actuated was such a perfect unit among them, as to be

fitly represented, especially the effects produced thereby were fitly represented by the augmented weight and force of the vapors floating in mid-heaven, collected and congealed into *hailstones*, which in their descending showers, bear down and crush almost every thing which opposes their descent to the *earth*. And the *fire* of God's altar poured out by the Holy Spirit, and glowing in the hearts of a holy ministry, and spreading its power and influence abroad, these efficient agencies result in yielding submission upon the part of multitudes of believing souls; but with many others, it only provokes resistance and persecution; these thinking to check its onward course by executing the most prominent leaders in the holy cause; and they even multiply executions. But the *blood* of martyrs mingled with this hail and fire, so far from destroying them, or even diminishing their power and influence, greatly augments their weight and force; for the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. This strange composition of elements—if we look only at their figurative representatives—but most powerfully efficient agencies, were cast upon the earth—upon the pagan Roman empire. And the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.—Trees, representing the principal rulers of governments generally, here represent the kings and princes of the Roman empire, and, perhaps, of regions beyond; and green grass, representing the multitudes governed in pagan countries. Of the trees, a very large proportion, and of the grass, all green grass, whose simplicity had not been corrupted and rendered impervious by error, were consumed by the powerful influences cast upon them. In other words, pagan Rome was revolutionized into Christian Rome; and the triumphs of Christianity extended even to regions beyond. For Jesus Christ had promised his disciples that, even before the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel of the kingdom should be preached unto all nations. Mat. xxiv.

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

14: *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.* And, that this prophecy applies to the destruction of Jerusalem, and not to the end of the world, or general judgment, is evident from the thirty-fourth verse: *Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.* For the history of the spread and success of the gospel during this period, see the notes on the opening of the first seal. The scenes of the *first, second, and third trumpets*, certainly are not entirely separate and distinct from each other in point of time: each, however, represents its own great subject.

Verse 8 *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire, was cast into the sea:—* The *trumpet* of the *second angel* heralds the same great event brought to view by the opening of the *second seal*:—the invasion of Palestine, and the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The importance of the event fully justifies the repetition of the prophecy in this place. The figures employed here are more forcible and grand than those employed in the opening of the *seal*. The language is not stronger, however, than that employed by Jesus Christ himself, on the same subject, in Matt. xxiv. A *mountain*, representing a strong pagan government, and the *sea*, the corrupt Jewish church, this immense thing: *As it were a mountain burning with fire cast into the sea*, very forcibly represents this overwhelmingly great and fearfully destructive invasion. And that a *third part*, at least, of the vast multitudes of people within the walls of the city of Jerusalem at that time, were actually *destroyed*, is a fact estab-

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

lished by the history of the siege, and destruction of the city. The reader must be referred to the notes on the second seal, to which we will here add some few quotations from that very remarkable history.

Verse 9 *And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*—The following is an account of a naval engagement between the Jews and the Romans, on the Lake of Genesareth, given by Josephus, in his Wars of the Jews, Book III., chap. x.: “And now Vespasian pitched his camp between this city (Tiberias) and Tarichea, but fortified his camp more strongly, as suspecting that he should be forced to stay there and have a long war; for all the innovators had gotten together at Tarichea, as relying upon the strength of the city, and on the lake that lay by it. This lake is called by the people of the country, the *Lake of Genesareth*. The city itself is situated like Tiberias, at the bottom of a mountain; and, on those sides which are not washed by the sea, had been strongly fortified by Josephus, though not so strongly as Tiberias. . . . Yet had they a great number of ships gotten ready upon the lake, that in case they were beaten at land, they might retire to them; and they were so fitted up that they might undertake a sea-fight also. But as the Romans were building a wall about their camp, Jesus and his party were neither affrighted at their number nor at the good order they were in, but made a sally upon them, and at the very first onset the builders of the walls were dispersed, and these pulled what little they had before built to pieces; but as soon as they saw the armed men getting together, and before they had

suffered any thing themselves, they retired to their own men. But then the Romans pursued them, and drove them into their ships, where they launched out as far as might give them an opportunity of reaching the Romans with what they threw at them, and then cast anchor and brought their ships close, as in line of battle, and thence fought the enemy from the sea, who were themselves at land. But Vespasian, hearing that a great multitude of them were gotten together in the plain that was before the city, he thereupon sent his son, with six hundred chosen horsemen, to disperse them. But when Titus perceived that the enemy was very numerous, he sent to his father; and informed him that he should want more forces." After the battle upon the plain and the retreat of the Jews, who escaped into the city, Josephus says, "But now there fell out a terrible sedition among them within the city, for the inhabitants themselves, who had possessions there, and to whom the city belonged, were not disposed to fight from the very beginning. . . . Those that have escaped our hands are in an uproar among one another. We have the city if we make haste. . . . As soon as Titus had said this, he leaped upon his horse, and rode apace down to the lake, by which lake he marched and entered into the city the first of them all, as did the others soon after him. Hereupon those that were upon the walls were seized with a terror at the boldness of the attempt, nor durst any one venture to fight with him, or to hinder him; so they left guarding the city, and some of those that were with Jesus, fled over the country; while others of them ran down to the lake, and met the enemy in the teeth, and some were slain as they were getting up into ships, but others of them as they attempted to overtake those that were already gone aboard. There was also a great slaughter made in the city, while those foreigners that had not fled away already, made opposition; but the natural inhabitants were killed

without fighting; for in hopes of Titus giving them his right hand for their security, and out of the consciousness that they had not given any consent to the war, they avoided fighting, till Titus had slain the authors of this revolt, and then put a stop to any farther slaughter, out of commiseration of these inhabitants of the place; but for those that had fled to the lake, upon seeing the city taken, they sailed as far as they possibly could from the enemy. Hereupon, Titus sent one of his horsemen to his father, and let him know the good news of what he had done, at which, as was natural, he was very joyful, both on account of the courage and glorious actions of his son, for he thought that now the greatest part of the war was over. He then came thither himself, and set men to guard the city, and gave them command to take care that nobody got privately out of it, but to kill such as attempted so to do; and on the next day he went down to the lake, and commanded that vessels should be fitted up, in order to pursue those that had escaped in the ships. These vessels were quickly gotten ready accordingly, because there was great plenty of materials, and a great number of artificers also. . . . But now, when the vessels were gotten ready, Vespasian put upon ship-board as many of his forces as he thought sufficient to be too hard for those that were upon the lake, and set sail after them. Now these which were driven into the lake could neither fly to the land, where all was in their enemy's hand, and in war against them, nor could they fight upon the level by sea, for their ships were small and fitted only for piracy; they were too weak to fight with Vespasian's vessels, and the mariners that were in them were so few, that they were afraid to come near the Romans, who attacked them in great numbers. However, as they sailed round about the vessels, and sometimes as they came near them, they threw stones at the Romans when they were a good way off, or

came closer and fought them, yet did they receive the greatest harm themselves in both cases. As for the stones they threw at the Romans, they only made a sound one after another, for they threw them against such as were in their armor, while the Roman darts could reach the Jews themselves; and when they ventured to come near the Romans they became sufferers themselves before they could do any harm to the other, and were drowned, they and their ships together. As for those that endeavored to come to an actual fight, the Romans ran many of them through with their long poles. Sometimes the Romans leaped into their ships, with swords in their hands, and slew them; but when some of them met the vessels, the Romans caught them by the middle, and destroyed at once their ships and themselves who were taken in them. And for such as were drowning in the sea, if they lifted their heads up above the water, they were either killed by darts, or caught by the vessels; but if, in the desperate case they were in, they attempted to swim to their enemies, the Romans cut off either their heads or their hands; and indeed they were destroyed after various manners everywhere, till the rest, being put to flight, were forced to get upon the land, while the vessels encompassed them about on the sea; but as many of these were repulsed when they were getting ashore, they were killed by the darts upon the lake, and the Romans leaped out of their vessels, and destroyed a great many more upon the land: one might then see the lake all bloody and full of dead bodies, for not one of them escaped. And a terrible stink, and a very sad sight there was on the following days over that country; for as for the shores, they were full of shipwrecks, and of dead bodies all swelled; and as the dead bodies were inflamed by the sun, and putrefied, they corrupted the air insomuch that the misery was not only the object of commiseration to the Jews, but to

those that hated them, and had been the authors of that misery. This was the upshot of the sea-fight. The number of the slain, including those that were killed in the city before, was six thousand and five hundred." Though this literal fulfillment of this part of the prophecy upon the *second trumpet* certainly deserves consideration, yet, it quite probably—almost certainly—is not the primary meaning of the prophecy. For though these judgments came upon the corrupt Jewish church, as a just punishment for her sins, and a large majority of the people, especially the officials, were justly obnoxious to these judgments, yet many, very many good people who, though ignorant, were nevertheless sincere, and who really had the life of godliness in their souls, were unavoidably exposed with the guilty, and actually died, many of them, in the same common ruin which came upon them as a nation, and as a church; for their nationality here terminated, and their daily sacrifice ceased—a very important item in the Jewish religion—which, as it was providential, shows that it had served the purpose for which it was intended. And their rulers thus became guilty, by their obstinacy and perverseness, of the blood of many of the very best men among them; as they are also guilty of the blood of Christ; for, according to their own request, his blood is upon them and upon their children. And though their nationality was blotted from the map of the world almost eighteen centuries ago, they are yet preserved as a distinct people, and even as a church, though dispersed among all nations; whereas, had their extirpation been intended, the language of the prophecy, fearfully strong as it is, would have been different. For though *the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed; and though this people exist not as a nation, yet have they*

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

commercial intercourse with all nations everywhere. And it is a singular fact, that this people, without national existence, are, nevertheless, nothing else but a commercial people. Do they either cultivate or manufacture? If so, I know nothing of it.

Verse 10 *And the third angel sounded*,—The trumpet of *the third angel* heralds the development of scenes, not fully brought to view by the opening of the *seals*, and these scenes occupy a space between the *second* and *third seals*. *And there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp*,—This *great flaming star* seems to represent Constantine the Great, who certainly occupied the most prominent and brilliant position, on the subject of religion, before the world, ever occupied by an uninspired man; and we must here, as in a hundred other places, and more, in this very peculiarly wonderful book, mark well the peculiar phraseology of the text; for this *star* only *burned as it were a lamp*. And it was certainly a great fall of this *great star*, from his eminent position in the true church of God, to attempt by coercive means, to bring about a moral, a religious revolution in the minds and hearts of his subjects, creatures of God, endowed with volition, who, if really converted to Christianity, as he desired, must be convinced of its truth and purity. To be convinced that *waters* and *many waters*, signify *peoples* and multitudes of people, we have only to turn to chap. xvii. 1–15, of this book. And while *heaven*, in this book, the material *heaven*, represents the pure church of God, and the source of its light, its brilliancy, above and around us, *the sun* represents the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,

11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

the Lord Jesus Christ; and while the pure *waters of heaven* represent true believers in the true God; and while *the sea*, the waters of which are commingled with the mud of earth, represents the church in a corrupt state; and while these *waters* represent the membership of the church, whose minds are more or less beclouded by error, *the rivers*, the ever-flowing, and everywhere flowing *rivers of earth*, seem very appropriately to represent the religious state of people everywhere, untaught by direct and clear revelation from God, or in a pagan state; whereas, *trees*, and *green grass*, as in the seventh verse of this chapter, represent pagan rulers, and subjects, politically. This great flaming star *fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters*, for the great pagan Roman empire had become so extensive and powerful, as to rule the principal part of Europe, one of the three grand divisions of the then known world, and no very inconsiderable part of Asia and Africa. (See the seventh verse of this chapter, and the notes there.) It may not be improper here to remark that, *the fountains of waters*, coming as they do from the dark caverns of the earth, very fitly represent man before he has been taught either truth or error, on the subject of religion.

Verse 11 *And the name of the star is called Wormwood*:—A very appropriate name, certainly, for this plant, though bitter to the taste, and nauseating too, is nevertheless strengthening and healthful to the stomach. And Constantine seems evidently to have intended that his strangely inconsistent and oppressive measures against the idolatry of his pagan subjects, should operate as a remedy against dan-

gerous errors. But this ill-advised policy could not but serve to embitter the feelings and prejudice the minds of these votaries of their ancient religion against the new doctrine. And the sore persecutions which they endured by government authority, excited these pagan priests and people to persecute with all the power and influence they possessed those adhering to the Christian cause. And thus the war commenced, and was vehemently and violently waged between the Christian (?) magistrates and the pagan priests. *And the third part of the waters became wormwood*;—A large proportion of these pagan Roman subjects, instead of falling in love with the truth, for its own sake, as they should and would have done had they been properly taught, very naturally resented the wrongs which they had received, and themselves became wormwood. And we have only to examine the history of this transition state of pagan Rome into Christian Rome, to see that *many*, very many *men*—those who could afford to be called by their right name without the use of a figure—who, standing out before God and all the world, bore the image of him who created them, *died of the waters, because they were made bitter*.—And may we not very confidently believe that this bitterness, this vast destruction of so many of the very best men in the empire, served, in a wonderful manner, to counteract the baneful influence of government patronage, for the establishment of the true religion? For such patronage, by interested and selfish secular motives, would draw into its service an order of men calculated to prejudice and hinder, rather than serve and promote, the cause of truth and purity. But the prospect of suffering for the truth, by avowing it and laboring for its interests, was calculated, had it not been for the persecution, at the same time also on the other side, to keep out of the Christian cause all except the truly sincere and faithful. So that we see the *wormwood*, though a very bitter

remedy, was nevertheless, in some degree, salutary. Notwithstanding, however, the numerous mistakes and great dangers to which a religious revolution is always liable, even under free toleration, but more especially by government authority and patronage, the results of the effects produced by this *flaming star* upon the religious aspect of the world, were both visible and lasting. For though paganism could not be at once crushed out and destroyed, yet its decline was apparent and its fall inevitable. Nor were the corruptions, which now became so manifest and increased with such fearful rapidity, and continued so long to curse the Church and the world, either wholly or mainly attributable to the mistakes or sins of Constantine, but to other causes. We take our first historical quotation on this subject from "Gibbon's Rome," Chap. XVI.: "The mild and humane temper of Constantius was averse to the oppression of any part of his subjects. The principal offices of his palace were exercised by Christians. He loved their persons, esteemed their fidelity, and entertained not any dislike to their religious principles. But as long as Constantius remained in the subordinate station of Cæsar, it was not in his power openly to reject the edicts of Diocletian, or to disobey the commands of Maximian. His authority contributed, however, to alleviate the sufferings which he pitied and abhorred. He consented, with reluctance, to the ruin of the churches; but he ventured to protect the Christians themselves from the fury of the populace and from the rigor of the laws. The provinces of Gaul (under which we may probably include those of Britain) were indebted for the singular tranquillity which they enjoyed, to the gentle interposition of their sovereign. But Datianus, the president, or governor, of Spain, actuated either by zeal or policy, chose rather to execute the public edicts of the emperors than to understand the secret intentions of Constantius, and it can scarcely be

doubted that his provincial administration was stained with the blood of a few martyrs. The elevation of Constantius to the supreme and independent dignity of Augustus, gave a free scope to the exercise of his virtues, and the shortness of his reign did not prevent him from establishing a system of toleration of which he left the precept and example to his son Constantine. His fortunate son, from the first moment of his accession, declaring himself the protector of the church, at length deserved the appellation of the first emperor who publicly professed and established the Christian religion. The motives of his conversion, as they may variously be deduced from benevolence, from policy, from conviction, or from remorse; and the progress of the revolution, which under his powerful influence, and that of his sons, rendered Christianity the reigning religion of the Roman empire, will form a very interesting and important chapter in the present volume of this history. At present it may be sufficient to observe, that every victory of Constantine was productive of some relief or benefit to the church." We will now make some quotations from Gibbon's Chapter XX.: "The public establishment of Christianity may be considered as one of those important and domestic revolutions which excite the most lively curiosity, and afford the most valuable instruction. The victories and the civil policy of Constantine no longer influence the state of Europe; but a considerable portion of the globe still retains the impression which it received from the conversion of that monarch; and the ecclesiastical institutions of his reign are still connected by an indissoluble chain with the opinions, the passions, and the interests of the present generation. In the consideration of a subject which may be examined with impartiality, but cannot be viewed with indifference, a difficulty immediately arises of a very unexpected nature: that of ascertaining the real and precise date of the conversion

of Constantine. The eloquent Lactantius, in the midst of his court, seems impatient to proclaim to the world the glorious example of the sovereign of Gaul; who, in the first moments of his reign, acknowledged and adored the majesty of the true and only God. The learned Eusebius has ascribed the faith of Constantine to the remarkable sign which was displayed in the heavens whilst he meditated and prepared the Italian expedition. The historian Zosimus maliciously asserts that the emperor had imbrued his hands in the blood of his eldest son before he publicly renounced the gods of Rome and of his ancestors. The perplexity produced by these discordant authorities is derived from the behavior of Constantine himself. According to the strictness of ecclesiastical language, the first of the *Christian* emperors was unworthy of that name till the moment of his death, since it was only during his last illness that he received, as a catechumen, the imposition of hands, and was afterward admitted by the initiatory rites of baptism into the number of the faithful. The Christianity of Constantine must be allowed in a much more vague and qualified sense; and the nicest accuracy is required in tracing the slow and almost imperceptible gradations by which the monarch declared himself the protector, and at length the proselyte, of the church. It was an arduous task to eradicate the habits and prejudices of his education, to acknowledge the divine power of Christ, and to understand that the truth of *his* revelation was incompatible with the worship of the gods. The obstacles which he had probably experienced in his own mind instructed him to proceed with caution in the momentous change of a national religion; and he insensibly discovered his new opinions, as far as he could enforce them with safety and with effect. While this important revolution yet remained in suspense, the Christians and the pagans watched the conduct of their sovereign with

the same anxiety, but with very opposite sentiments. The former were promoted by every motive of zeal, as well as vanity, to exaggerate the marks of his favor and the evidences of his faith. The latter, till their just apprehensions were changed into despair and resentment, attempted to conceal from the world, and from themselves, that the gods of Rome could no longer reckon the emperor in the number of their votaries. The same passions and prejudices have engaged the partial writers of the times to connect the public profession of Christianity with the most glorious or the most ignominious era of the reign of Constantine. Whatever symptoms of Christian piety might transpire in the discourses or actions of Constantine, he persevered till he was near forty years of age in the practice of the established religion; and the same conduct which in the court of Nicomedia might be imputed to his fear, could be ascribed only to the inclination or policy of the sovereign of Gaul. His liberality restored and enriched the temples of the gods; the medals which issued from the imperial mint are impressed with the figures and attributes of Jupiter and Apollo, of Mars and Hercules; and his filial piety increased the council of Olympus by the solemn apotheosis of his father Constantius. But the devotion of Constantine was more peculiarly directed to the genius of the sun, the Apollo of Greek and Roman mythology; and he was pleased to be represented with the symbols of the god of light and poetry. As long as Constantine exercised a limited sovereignty over the provinces of Gaul, his Christian subjects were protected by the authority, and perhaps by the laws, of a prince, who wisely left to the gods the care of vindicating their own honor. If we may credit the assertion of Constantine himself, he had been an indignant spectator of the savage cruelties which were inflicted by the hands of Roman soldiers on those citizens, whose religion was their

only crime. In the East and in the West he had seen the different effects of severity and indulgence; and as the former was rendered still more odious by the example of Galerius, his implacable enemy, the latter was recommended to his imitation by the authority and advice of a dying father. The son of Constantius immediately suspended or repealed the edicts of persecution, and granted the free exercise of their religious ceremonies to all those who had already professed themselves members of the church. They were soon encouraged to depend on the favor as well as on the justice of their sovereign, who had imbibed a secret and sincere reverence for the name of Christ, and for the God of the Christians. About five months after the conquest of Italy, the emperor made a solemn and authentic declaration of his sentiments by the celebrated edict of Milan, which restored peace to the Catholic church. In the personal interview of the two western princes, Constantine, by the ascendant of genius and power, obtained the ready concurrence of his colleague, Licinius; the union of their names and authority disarmed the fury of Maximin; and after the death of the tyrant of the East, the edict of Milan was received as a general and fundamental law of the Roman world. The same extraordinary providence, which was no longer confined to the Jewish people, might elect Constantine and his family as the protectors of the Christian world; and the devout Lactantius announces, in a prophetic tone, the future glories of his long and universal reign. Galerius and Maximin, Maxentius and Licinius, were the rivals who shared with the favorite of Heaven the provinces of the empire. The tragic deaths of Galerius and Maximin soon gratified the resentment, and fulfilled the sanguine expectations of the Christians. The success of Constantine against Maxentius and Licinius removed the two formidable competitors who still opposed the triumph of the second David, and his

cause might seem to claim the peculiar interposition of Providence. The character of the Roman tyrant disgraced the purple and human nature; and though the Christians might enjoy his precarious favor, they were exposed, with the rest of his subjects, to the effects of his wanton and capricious cruelty. The conduct of Licinius soon betrayed the reluctance with which he had consented to the wise and humane regulations of the edict of Milan. The convocation of provincial synods was prohibited in his dominions; his Christian officers were ignominiously dismissed; and if he avoided the guilt, or rather the danger, of a general persecution, his partial oppressions were rendered still more odious by the violation of a solemn and voluntary engagement. While the East, according to the lively expressions of Eusebius, was involved in the shades of infernal darkness, the auspicious rays of celestial light warmed and illuminated the provinces of the West. The piety of Constantine was admitted as an unexceptionable proof of the justice of his arms; and his use of victory confirmed the opinion of the Christians that their hero was inspired, and conducted by the Lord of hosts. The conquest of Italy produced a general edict of toleration; and as soon as the defect of Licinius had invested Constantine with the sole dominion of the Roman world, he immediately, by circular letters, exhorted all his subjects to imitate without delay the example of their sovereign, and to embrace the divine truth of Christianity. The sublime theory of the gospel had made a much fainter impression on the heart than on the understanding of Constantine himself. He pursued the great object of his ambition through the dark and bloody paths of war and policy; and, after the victory, he abandoned himself, without moderation, to the abuse of his fortune. Instead of asserting his just superiority above the imperfect heroism and profane philosophy of Trojan and

the Antonines, the mature age of Constantine forfeited the reputation which he had acquired in his youth. As he gradually advanced in the knowledge of the truth, he proportionally declined in the practice of virtue; and the same year of his reign in which he convened the Council of Nice, was polluted by the execution, or rather murder, of his eldest son. This date is alone sufficient to refute the ignorant and malicious suggestions of Zosimus, who affirms that after the death of Crispus, the remorse of his father accepted from the ministers of Christianity the expiation which he had vainly solicited from the pagan pontiffs. At the time of the death of Crispus the emperor could no longer hesitate in the choice of a religion, he could no longer be ignorant that the church was possessed of an infallible remedy, though he chose to defer the application of it till the approach of death had removed the temptation and danger of a relapse. The bishops whom he summoned in his last illness to the palace of Nicomedia, were edified by the fervor with which he requested and received the sacrament of baptism by the solemn protestation that the remainder of his life should be worthy of a disciple of Christ, and by his humble refusal to wear the imperial purple after he had been clothed in the white garment of a neophyte. The example and reputation of Constantine seemed to countenance the delay of baptism. Future tyrants were encouraged to believe that the innocent blood which they might shed in a long reign would instantly be washed away in the waters of regeneration, and the abuse of religion dangerously undermined the foundations of moral virtue. The gratitude of the church has exalted the virtues and excused the failings of a generous patron who seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman world; and the Greeks who celebrate the festival of the imperial saint, seldom mention the name of Constantine without adding the

title of *equal to the apostles*. Such a comparison, if it allude to the character of those divine missionaries, must be imputed to the extravagance of impious flattery. But if the parallel be confined to the extent and number of their evangelic victories, the success of Constantine might perhaps equal that of the apostles themselves. By the edicts of toleration he removed the temporal disadvantages which had hitherto retarded the progress of Christianity, and its active and numerous ministers received a free permission, a liberal encouragement, to recommend the salutary truths of revelation by every argument which could affect the reason or piety of mankind. The exact balance of the two religions continued but a moment, and the piercing eye of ambition and avarice soon discovered that the profession of Christianity might contribute to the interest of the present as well as of a future life. The hopes of wealth and honors, the example of an emperor, his exhortations, his irresistible smiles, diffused conviction among the venal and obsequious crowds which usually fill the apartments of a palace. The cities which signalized a forward zeal by the voluntary destruction of their temples, were distinguished by municipal privileges and rewarded with popular donatives; and the new capital of the East gloried in the singular advantage that Constantinople was never profaned by the worship of idols. As the lower ranks of society are governed by imitation, the conversion of those who possessed any eminence of birth, of power, or of riches, was soon followed by dependent multitudes. The salvation of the common people was purchased at an easy rate, if it be true that in one year twelve thousand men were baptized at Rome, besides a proportionable number of women and children, and that a white garment with twenty pieces of gold had been promised by the emperor to every convert. The powerful influence of Constantine was not circumscribed by the

narrow limits of his life or of his dominions. The education which he bestowed on his sons and nephews secured to the empire a race of princes whose faith was still more lively and sincere as they imbibed in their earliest infancy the spirit, or at least the doctrine, of Christianity. War and commerce had spread the knowledge of the gospel beyond the confines of the Roman provinces, and the barbarians who had disdained an humble and proscribed sect, soon learned to esteem a religion which had been so lately embraced by the greatest monarch and the most civilized nation of the globe. The Goths and Germans who enlisted under the standard of Rome revered the cross which glittered at the head of the legions, and their fierce countrymen received at the same time the lessons of faith and of humanity. The kings of Iberia and Armenia worshiped the God of their protector, and their subjects, who have invariably preserved the name of Christians, soon formed a sacred and perpetual connection with their Roman brethren. The Christians of Persia were suspected, in time of war, of preferring their religion to their country, but as long as peace subsisted between the two empires the persecuting spirit of the Magi was effectually restrained by the interposition of Constantine. The rays of the gospel illuminated the coast of India. The colonies of Jews who had penetrated into Arabia and Ethiopia opposed the progress of Christianity, but the labor of the missionaries was in some measure facilitated by a previous knowledge of the Mosaic revelation, and Abyssinia still reveres the memory of Frumentius, who in the time of Constantine devoted his life to the conversion of those sequestered regions. Under the reign of his son Constantius, Theophilus, who was himself of Indian extraction, was invested with the double character of ambassador and bishop. He embarked on the Red Sea with two hundred horses of the purest breed of Cappadocia, which were sent

by the emperor to the prince of the Sabæans, or Homerites. Theophilus was intrusted with many other useful or curious presents, which might raise the admiration and conciliate the friendship of the barbarians, and he successfully employed several years in a pastoral visit to the churches of the torrid zone. The irresistible power of the Roman emperors was displayed in the important and dangerous change of the national religion. The terror of a military force silenced the faint and unsupported murmurs of the pagans, and there was reason to expect that the cheerful submission of the Christian clergy, as well as people, would be the result of conscience and gratitude. It was long since established, as a fundamental maxim of the Roman constitution, that every rank of citizens was alike subject to the laws, and that the care of religion was the right as well as duty of the civil magistrate. Constantine and his successors could not easily persuade themselves that they had forfeited, by their conversion, any branch of the imperial prerogatives, or that they were incapable of giving laws to a religion which they had protected and embraced. The emperors still continued to exercise a supreme jurisdiction over the ecclesiastical order; and Book XVI. of the Theodosian code represents, under a variety of titles, the authority which they assumed in the government of the Catholic church. But the distinction of the spiritual and temporal powers, which had never been imposed on the free spirit of Greece and Rome, was introduced and confirmed by the legal establishment of Christianity. The office of supreme pontiff, which from the time of Numa to that of Augustus had always been exercised by one of the most eminent of the senators, was at length united to the imperial dignity. The first magistrate of the state, as often as he was prompted by superstition or policy, performed with his own hands the sacerdotal functions; nor

was there any order of priests, either at Rome or in the provinces, who claimed a more sacred character among men, or a more intimate communication with the gods. But in the Christian church, which intrusts the service of the altar to a perpetual succession of consecrated ministers, the monarch, whose spiritual rank is less honorable than that of the meanest deacon, was seated below the rails of the sanctuary and confounded with the rest of the faithful multitude. While the *civil* and *military* professions were separated by the policy of Constantine, a new and perpetual order of *ecclesiastical* ministers, always respectable, sometimes dangerous, was established in the church and state. The imperial city of Constantinople was in some measure raised at the expense, and was adorned with the spoils, of the opulent temples of Greece and Asia; the sacred property was confiscated, the statues of gods and heroes were transported, with rude familiarity, among a people who considered them as objects not of adoration, but of curiosity; the gold and silver were restored to circulation; and the magistrates, the bishops, and the eunuchs improved the fortunate occasion of gratifying at once their zeal, their avarice, and their resentment.

. . . The sons of Constantine trod in the footsteps of their father with more zeal and with less discretion. The pretenses of rapine and oppression were insensibly multiplied; every indulgence was shown to the illegal behavior of the Christians; every doubt was explained to the disadvantage of the pagans, and the demolition of the temples was celebrated as one of the auspicious events of the reign of Constantine and Constantius. The evidence of facts, and the monuments which are still extant, of brass and marble, continue to prove the public exercise of the pagan worship during the whole reign of the sons of Constantine. The divisions of Christianity suspended

the ruin of *paganism*, and the holy war against the infidels was less vigorously prosecuted by princes and bishops, who were more immediately alarmed by the guilt and danger of domestic rebellion. The extirpation of *idolatry* might have been justified by the established principles of intolerance, but the hostile sects, which alternately reigned in the imperial court, were mutually apprehensive of alienating and perhaps exasperating the minds of a powerful though declining faction. Every motive of authority and fashion, of interest and reason, now militated on the side of Christianity; but two or three generations elapsed before their victorious influence was universally felt. The religion which had so long and so lately been established in the Roman empire was still revered by a numerous people, less attached indeed to speculative opinion than to ancient custom. The honors of the state and army were indifferently bestowed on all the subjects of Constantine and Constantius, and a considerable portion of knowledge, and wealth, and valor were still engaged in the service of polytheism. The superstition of the senator and of the peasant, of the poet and the philosopher, was derived from very different causes, but they met with equal devotion in the temples of the gods. Their zeal was insensibly provoked by the insulting triumph of a proscribed sect; and their hopes were revived by the well-grounded confidence that the presumptive heir of the empire, a young and violent hero, who had delivered Gaul from the arms of the barbarians, had secretly embraced the religion of his ancestors. The character of Apostate has injured the reputation of Julian, and the enthusiasm which clouded his virtues has exaggerated the real and apparent magnitude of his faults. Our partial ignorance may represent him as a philosophic monarch who studied to protect, with an equal hand, the religious factions of the empire, and to allay the theological fever which

had inflamed the minds of the people from the edicts of Diocletian to the exile of Athanasius. . . . A devout and sincere attachment for the gods of Athens and Rome constituted the ruling passion of Julian; the powers of an enlightened understanding were betrayed and corrupted by the influence of superstitious prejudice, and the phantoms, which existed only in the mind of the emperor, had a real and pernicious effect on the government of the empire. . . . The cause of his strange and fatal apostasy may be derived from the early period of his life, when he was left an orphan in the hands of the murderers of his family. The names of Christ and of Constantius, the ideas of slavery and of religion, were soon associated in a youthful imagination, which was susceptible of the most lively impressions.

. . . The dull and obstinate understanding of Gallus embraced with implicit zeal the doctrines of Christianity, which never influenced his conduct or moderated his passions. The mild disposition of the younger brother was less repugnant to the precepts of the gospel, and his active curiosity might have been gratified by a theological system, which explains the mysterious essence of the Deity, and opens the boundless prospect of invisible and future worlds. But the independent spirit of Julian refused to yield the passive and unresisting obedience which was required in the name of religion by the haughty ministers of the church.

. . . . As soon as Gallus was invested with the honors of the purple, Julian was permitted to breathe the air of freedom, of literature, and of paganism. . . . The creed which Julian adopted for his own use was of the largest dimensions, and by a strange contradiction he disdained the salutary yoke of the gospel while he made a voluntary offering of his reason on the altars of Jupiter and Apollo. One of the orations of Julian is consecrated to the honor of Cybele, the mother of the gods, who required from her

effeminate priests the bloody sacrifice so rashly performed by the madness of the Phrygian boy. . . . His residence at Athens confirmed this unnatural alliance of philosophy and superstition. He obtained the privilege of a solemn initiation into the mysteries of Eleusis, which amidst the general decay of the Grecian worship still retained some vestiges of their primitive sanctity; and such was the zeal of Julian that he afterward invited the Eleusinian pontiff to the court of Gaul for the sole purpose of consummating, by mystic rites and sacrifices, the great work of his sanctification. . . . In the caverns of Ephesus and Eleusis the mind of Julian was penetrated with sincere, deep, and unalterable enthusiasm; though he might sometimes exhibit the vicissitudes of pious fraud and hypocrisy which may be observed, or at least suspected, in the characters of the most conscientious fanatics. From that moment he consecrated his life to the service of the gods, and while the occupations of war, of government, and of study, seemed to claim the whole measure of his time, a stated portion of the hours of the night was invariably reserved for the exercise of private devotion. . . . As soon as he ascended the throne he assumed, according to the custom of his predecessors, the character of supreme pontiff, not only as the most honorable title of imperial greatness, but as a sacred and important office, the duties of which he was resolved to execute with the most pious diligence. . . . The favor of Julian was almost equally divided between the pagans who had firmly adhered to the worship of their ancestors, and the Christians who prudently embraced the religion of their sovereign. The acquisition of new proselytes gratified the ruling passions of his soul—superstition and vanity—and he was heard to declare, with the enthusiasm of a missionary, that if he could render each individual richer than Midas, and every city greater than Babylon, he

should not esteem himself the benefactor of mankind, unless, at the same time, he could reclaim his subjects from their impious revolt against the immortal gods. An ungenerous distinction was admitted into the mind and councils of Julian, that according to the difference of their religious sentiments, one part of his subjects deserved his favor and friendship, while the other was entitled only to the common benefits that his justice could not refuse to an obedient people. The powers of government were intrusted to the pagans, who professed an ardent zeal for the religion of their ancestors; and as the choice of the emperor was often directed by the rules of divination, the favorites whom he preferred as the most agreeable to the gods, did not always obtain the approbation of mankind. Under the administration of their enemies, the Christians had much to suffer, and more to apprehend, The temper of Julian was averse to cruelty; and the care of his reputation, which was exposed to the eyes of the universe, restrained the philosophic monarch from violating the laws of justice and toleration, which he himself had so recently established. But the provincial ministers of his authority were placed in a less conspicuous station. In the exercise of arbitrary power, they consulted the wishes rather than the commands of their sovereign; and ventured to exercise a secret and vexatious tyranny against the sectaries on whom they were not permitted to confer the honors of martyrdom. The emperor, who dissembled as long as possible his knowledge of the injustice that was exercised in his name, expressed his real sense of the conduct of his officers by gentle reproofs and substantial rewards. The zeal of the ministers of Julian was instantly checked by the frown of their sovereign; but when the father of his country declares himself the leader of a faction, the license of popular fury cannot easily be restrained nor consistently

punished. Julian, in a public composition, applauds the devotion and loyalty of the holy cities of Syria, whose pious inhabitants had destroyed, at the first signal, the sepulchers of the Galileans; and faintly complains that they had revenged the injuries of the gods with less moderation than he should have recommended. This imperfect and reluctant confession may appear to confirm the ecclesiastical narratives: that in the cities of Gaza, Ascalon, Caesarea, Heliopolis, etc., the pagans abused without prudence or remorse the moment of their prosperity; that the unhappy objects of their cruelty were released from torture only by death; that as their mangled bodies were dragged through the streets, they were pierced (such was the universal rage) by the spits of cooks and the distaffs of enraged women; and that the entrails of Christian priests and virgins, after they had been tasted by those bloody fanatics, were mixed with barley, and contemptuously thrown to the unclean animals of the city. Such scenes of religious madness exhibit the most contemptible and odious picture of human nature; but the massacre of Alexandria attracts still more attention, from the certainty of the fact, the rank of the victims, and the splendor of the capital of Egypt. . . . About the same time that Julian was informed of the tumult of Alexandria, he received intelligence from Edessa that the proud and wealthy faction of the Arians had insulted the weakness of the Valentinians, and committed such disorders as ought not to be suffered with impunity in a well-regulated state. Without expecting the slow forms of justice, the exasperated prince directed his mandate to the magistrates of Edessa, by which he confiscated the whole property of the church: the money was distributed among the soldiers; the lands were added to the domain; and this act of oppression was aggravated by the most ungenerous irony. 'I show myself,' says Julian, 'the true friend of the Galileans.

12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

Their *admirable* law has promised the kingdom of heaven to the poor; and they will advance with more diligence in the paths of virtue and salvation when they are relieved by my assistance from the load of temporal possessions. Take care,' pursued the monarch, in a more serious tone, 'take care how you provoke my patience and humanity. If these disorders continue, I will revenge on the magistrates the crimes of the people; and you will have reason to dread not only confiscation and exile, but fire and the sword.' The tumults of Alexandria were, doubtless, of a more bloody and dangerous nature; but a Christian bishop had fallen by the hands of the pagans; and the public epistle of Julian affords a very lively proof of the partial spirit of his administration. . . . It is impossible to determine how far the zeal of Julian would have prevailed over his good sense and humanity; but if we seriously reflect on the strength and spirit of the church, we shall be convinced that, before the emperor could have extinguished the religion of Christ, he must have involved his country in the horrors of a civil war."

Verse 12 *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon*,—It is very remarkable that the same fractional number—the *third part*—is employed in each and every one of the *four* trumpets sounded in this chapter. We take this as very conclusive testimony that this definite is given for an indefinite proportion. The *sun* representing the divine truth of Christianity, as it is fully and clearly revealed in the Christian era, and the *moon* representing Judaism, the

13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound !

scenes here presented most certainly are the deplorable corruptions of divine truth by the Roman church in the dark ages ; and the corruptions and darkness resting upon Judaism, as that people had persistently rejected the true light. And the darkened *stars* represent the vile corruptions and deplorable ignorance among the ministers of religion in that age. The peculiar manner of employing these figures—the *darkened sun, moon, and stars*—applied, as we have applied them, to the semi-infidelity of the corrupt church and ministry, corresponds most admirably with the application which we have made of the same emblems, employed differently, in the opening of the sixth seal. *And the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*—*The day*, the Christian age ; *the night*, the previous age of victims and emblems. The concluding part of this verse, gloomy and sad as the picture is, may be regarded as containing an idea not entirely destitute of hope and encouragement, from the fact that the period of this darkness is limited. As this portion of the prophecy—represented by the *sounding of the fourth angel*—is so extensive, applying to a period sweeping over some centuries, it is quite impracticable to make extracts from so much history, which would be at all satisfactory, without occupying much more space than can be appropriated to history accompanying one brief note ; consequently, the reader must be referred to the history of the church from the introduction of image worship, and the numerous other superstitious and idolatrous practices of the Roman church, up to the times of the Reformation at least.

Verse 13 *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying*

through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice,—The angel with a loud voice, which is here flying through the midst of heaven, seems to be the same which in the third verse stood at the altar, having a golden censer, with much incense; and he most certainly is no other than the Divine Spirit; for who, or what, but infinite wisdom could have advertised the world of the woes which were coming upon it in future ages. Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!—As the subjects of government and the members of the church are identical, great changes and powerful revolutions cannot come upon the one without very materially affecting the other; but the most material impressions made by the trumpets of the four angels noted in this chapter have been upon the church; whereas, the three woes predicted in this verse, and heralded by the sounding of the three following angels, seem to affect governments principally, and the church incidentally.

CHAPTER IX.

1 *At the sounding of the fifth angel, a star falleth from heaven, to whom is given the key of the bottomless pit. 2 He openeth the pit, and there come forth locusts like scorpions. 12 The first woe past. 13 The sixth trumpet soundeth. 14 Four angels are let loose that were bound.*

AND the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

NOTES.—CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1 *And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth:—In contemplating the character of the angel sounding the third trumpet, and this one sounding*

2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

the fifth, there is at least two important points in which they differ very materially. That one, a great star burning as it were a lamp, sent forth, and dispersed abroad a brilliant light; whereas this one, by bringing up from the abyss a dense cloud of smoke, obscuring even the great source of light and its reflectors, produced a degree of darkness quite the reverse of the light shed abroad by the other. Again, the primary work of the first was directed toward religion, though it failed not also to effect government; whereas this last had for its great leading object universal empire, to be attained by the almost irresistible influence of fanatical superstition in the name of religion. *And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*—And this great object of universal empire might be the better secured by keeping the intellectual and moral powers of men in the deepest gloom and darkness—even the darkness of the *bottomless pit*. And now, having taken this brief view of the character and work of this *star*, which *fell from heaven unto the earth*, we may the more certainly ascertain who and what, in the history of those times, answer to the picture reflected by this imagery. Mohammed, with his fanaticism and extensively ambitious views of conquest and empire, and the fanatical superstition and enthusiasm with which he inspired his followers, reflect this picture more clearly and fully than any thing else in all the history of the past.

Verse 2 *And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace;—* Among all the influences employed to becloud the intellectual and moral powers, what is more effectual than superstition? which quite probably is the thing here called *the key*

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

of the bottomless pit; by which even the abyss of darkness may be disclosed, that an impenetrable cloud of gloom may be let loose upon the superstitious fanatic, so darkening his understanding and stupefying his moral sensibilities, as to render them almost impervious to the light of divine truth and the influences of the Divine Spirit. *And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.*—The *sun* here most unquestionably represents the fully, clearly, perfectly revealed light of divine truth in the Christian age of the world; for Christ is the *Sun* of righteousness, and his word opens up the full-orbed glories of the light of truth divine; and the *air* as unquestionably represents the influences of the Spirit, for Christ himself says, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Again, on the day of Pentecost: And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house wherein they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Verse 3 *And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth*;—Superstition being the fruitful source of fanaticism, and these producing the very highest degree of enthusiasm, so that when a truly enthusiastic leader can avail himself of these helps in wielding the populace, he can more effectually secure a general uprising of the people for any great enterprise, than by any other means. And when we consider the course which Mohammed pursued, his retirement

4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt

to the cave near Mecca, and his contemplations there, by which he brought his own mind and feelings most effectually under these influences, so preparing himself to wield these same influences most successfully upon the people, we may form some tolerably good ideas of the means employed to procure the very marvelous success of that truly wonderful movement, which fills so much space in the world's history; and we will certainly be apt to conclude that these are the scenes represented by the symbols here employed in this prophecy. And these swarms of Arabs with their wonderful leader coming up—as locusts arising out of the earth—from a country not celebrated for its rivers, lakes, seas, or fountains of waters, and descending with such impetuosity, with such power and success, upon the Roman world and its provinces, and almost all Christendom seem to be most appropriately represented by this assemblage of imagery. *And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*—In addition to the physical effects of a sudden invasion by overwhelming numbers, laying waste the country, and destroying every green thing, the insidious genius of this artful leader introduces his fatal errors, by announcing first, in connection with them, the most important truth ever presented to the mind of man—THERE IS BUT ONE GOD. And here he immediately subjoins his fatal error—And Mohammed is the apostle of God. Thus opening up most effectually the way that he may introduce whatever he finds in his interest to teach, so corrupting the untutored mind and poisoning the unwary soul, that his followers, the successors of Christianity, the Mohammedans, may be as fatally in error—the one truth excepted—as their predecessors, the pagans were.

Verse 4 *And it was commanded them that they should not*

the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree;—It is very remarkable that the Mohammedan invasion was directed especially against Christianity, and not so much against the remains of paganism in the Roman empire, its provinces, and other countries where Christianity had been introduced. And Mohammed justified himself in this, by assuming that where polytheism prevailed from an entire want of a knowledge of the true God, the delinquents in true worship might be excused, but that Christians, who professed to know God, and yet associated—as he termed it—a companion with God, by teaching the doctrine of the Trinity, should be exterminated from the earth if they refused to embrace the truth which he presented to them, and to acknowledge his authority to govern as well as to teach. All this will appear quite clearly represented by these emblems, when we remember that *grass of the earth* represents the pagan multitude, and that *any green thing* may represent the individual pagans among the Romans; and *tree*, the ruler of a province, who may yet be inclined to adhere to the ancient religion. Hurt none of these; *but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.*—This scourge is permitted by Divine Providence to fall only on those who, though their privileges have been ample to lead them to a knowledge of the truth, either have never known it, or else having corrupted it by mixing fatal errors with it, they now *have not the seal of God in their foreheads*, or the truth of God in their minds. If we have taken a correct view of the symbolic language of the four verses just noted, the application seems to be perfectly appropriate and the meaning quite clear.

5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

Verse 5 *And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months*:—The protecting and preserving care of God's gracious providence is constantly and specially exercised over his church and people. Had it been otherwise, and had not bounds been set to the ambitious and enthusiastic designs of Mohammed, Christianity and civil liberty together might have been crushed out by the Saracen invasion, for at this time superstition had so far taken possession of the minds of the Roman Christians themselves, that they rivaled even the Arabian Mohammedans in this respect. These *five months* seem to be prophetic time—a period of one hundred and fifty years. *And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man*.—The poisonous, deadly influence of this almost fatal infection upon the Roman church during this period, was such that it became the burden of the history of the church, and even of the empire. And still Christianity survived all this, for the source of its vitality being in God, men and devils combined cannot overthrow it.

Verse 6 *And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them*.—That men in those days, even in the Christian church, did cultivate most assiduously these deadly principles of fanatical superstition, is as notorious as any thing known to history. For popes and prelates, bishops and priests together, so far from resisting this prevailing element among

7 And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions.

9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

the Saracen invaders, desired to have it still prevail among their own people, so that in the providence of God, the invaders, instead of being successfully resisted and driven out by the Christians, voluntarily fled from the empire and abandoned the enterprise.

Verse 7 *And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle*;—From manifest appearances the purpose of this invasion was conquest, for imperial authority; for these war-horses had on their heads *crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men*.—Is not all this fully justified even by the avowed purpose of Mohammed, of subjecting the infidels (by which is meant all men everywhere, except Mohammedans) to the authority of the true believers?

Verse 8 *And they had hair as the hair of women*,—It may not be improper to remind the reader that woman is an appropriate figure to represent religion; hence the prophecy as well as the history represents that the invaders indulged and justified all this violence and ambition by covering their designs with the appearance of religion—if not the appearance of religion, at least the pretense of propagating the true faith, which they scrupled not to do, even by violence; for *their teeth were as the teeth of lions*.

Verse 9 *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron*;—The Arabs and Turks, (for perhaps both these invasions are included under the sounding of this trumpet,)

10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months.

11 And they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon.

like all other fanatics, shielded themselves, as it were, with breastplates of iron, against remorse or even sympathy for any violence they may have used or any pain they may have inflicted in propagating their religion. And the rapidity, the impetuosity, the enthusiasm with which they executed their work upon the Roman Christians, is most forcibly represented by the following language: *And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.*

Verse 10 *And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails:*—The baneful influence of fatal error being instilled among the Roman Christians while the invaders were present with them, ceased not at their departure, for though the cause was removed, the infection remained, and those infected in their turn infected others; so that the deadly effects of error, so insidiously communicated by the fanaticism of the Mohammedans, was entailed upon the Roman Christians from generation to generation, even for a hundred and fifty years, without abatement, during the invasion, and long after the cause was removed; for *their power was to hurt men five months.*—This being prophetic time, which gives a day for a year, and thirty days to the month is a hundred and fifty years.

Verse 11 *And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit,*—This king—the angel of the bottomless pit—the angel of darkness—unquestionably is what the apostle in chap. xii. calls the great dragon, that old serpent, the devil, and Satan. And here we may clearly

see that the figure of the darkness of the *bottomless pit*, though the emblems have been multiplied and extensively varied, is still preserved from the beginning of the chapter. And to render the identity if possible still more indubitable, the original Scripture names of this king of error and of darkness are here given—*whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*

We must refer the reader to the opening of the third seal and the notes there. And having there introduced the history of the rise of Mohammedanism and the invasion of Christian countries by that power, we will here continue the history, for we regard the scenes under the sounding of this trumpet as being a continuation of those introduced by the opening of that seal. We commence here with an extract from Chap. LI., p. 194, vol. v., of the History: "About four years after the triumphs of the Persian war, the repose of Heraclius and the empire was again disturbed by a new enemy, the power of whose religion was more strongly felt than it was clearly understood by the Christians of the East. In his palace of Canstantinople or Antioch, he was awakened by the invasion of Syria, the loss of Bosra, and the danger of Damascus. An army of seventy thousand veterans, or new levies, was assembled at Hems, or Emesa, under the command of his General Wardan, and these troops consisting chiefly of cavalry, might be indifferently styled either Syrians, or Greeks, or Romans: *Syrians*, from the place of their birth or warfare; *Greeks*, from the religion and language of their sovereign; and *Romans*, from the proud appellation which was still profaned by the successors of Constantine. On the plain of Aiznadin, as Wardan rode on a white mule decorated with gold chains and surrounded with ensigns and standards, he was surprised by the near approach of a fierce and naked warrior, who had undertaken to view the state of the enemy. The adventurous valor of

Derar was inspired, and has perhaps been adorned, by the enthusiasm of his age and country. The hatred of the Christians, the love of spoil and the contempt of danger, were the ruling passions of the audacious Saracen, and the prospect of instant death could never shake his religious confidence or ruffle the calmness of his resolution, or even suspend the frank and martial pleasantry of his humor. In the most hopeless enterprises he was bold and prudent, and fortunate, after innumerable hazards, after being thrice a prisoner in the hands of the infidels, he still survived to relate the achievements and to enjoy the rewards of the Syrian conquest. On this occasion his single lance maintained a flying fight against thirty Romans, who were detached by Wardan, and after killing or unhorsing seventeen of their number, Derar returned in safety to his applauding brethren. When his rashness was mildly censured by the general, he excused himself with the simplicity of a soldier. 'Nay,' said Derar, 'I did not begin first; but they came out to take me, and I was afraid that God should see me turn my back; and, indeed I fought in good earnest, and without doubt God assisted me against them; and had I not been apprehensive of disobeying your orders, I should not have come away as I did; and I perceive already that they will fall into our hands.' In the presence of both armies, a venerable Greek advanced from the ranks with a liberal offer of peace, and the departure of the Saracens would have been purchased by a gift to each soldier of a turban, a robe, and a piece of gold, ten robes and a hundred pieces to their leader, one hundred robes and a thousand pieces to the caliph. A smile of indignation expressed the refusal of Caled. 'Ye Christian dogs, you know your option; the Koran, the tribute, or the sword. We are a people whose delight is in war, rather than in peace; and we despise your pitiful alms, since we shall be

speedily masters of your wealth, your families, and your persons.' Notwithstanding this apparent disdain, he was deeply conscious of the public danger: those who had been in Persia, and had seen the armies of Chosroes, confessed that they never beheld a more formidable array. From the superiority of the enemy the artful Saracen derived a fresh incentive of courage: 'You see before you,' said he, 'the united force of the Romans; you cannot hope to escape, but you may conquer Syria in a single day. The event depends on your discipline and patience. Reserve yourselves till the evening. It was in the evening that the Prophet was accustomed to vanquish.' During two successive engagements, his temperate firmness sustained the darts of the enemy and the murmurs of his troops. At length, when the spirits and quivers of the adverse line were almost exhausted, Caled gave the signal of onset and victory. The remains of the imperial army fled to Antioch, or Cæsarea, or Damascus; and the death of four hundred and seventy Moslems was compensated by the opinion that they had sent to hell above fifty thousand of the infidels. The spoil was inestimable—many banners and crosses of gold and silver, precious stones, silver and gold chains, and innumerable suits of the richest armor and apparel. The general distribution was postponed till Damascus should be taken; but the seasonable supply of arms became the instrument of new victories. The glorious intelligence was transmitted to the throne of the caliph; and Arabian tribes, the coldest or most hostile to the Prophet's mission, were eager and importunate to share the harvest of Syria. . . . After a siege of seventy days, the patience, and perhaps the provisions, of the Damascenes were exhausted; and the bravest of their chiefs submitted to the hard dictates of necessity. In the occurrences of peace and war, they had been taught to dread the fierceness of Caled, and to revere the mild

virtues of Abu Obeidah. At the hour of midnight, one hundred chosen deputies of the clergy and people were introduced to the tent of that venerable commander. He received and dismissed them with courtesy. They returned with a written agreement, on the faith of a companion of Mahomet, that all hostilities should cease; that the voluntary emigrants might depart in safety, with as much as they could carry away of their effects; and that the tributary subjects of the caliph should enjoy their lands and houses, with the use and possession of seven churches. The place of the first conquerors was supplied by a new generation of their children and countrymen; Syria became the seat and support of the house of Ommiyah; and the revenue, the soldiers, the ships of that powerful kingdom, were consecrated to enlarge on every side the empire of the caliphs. But the Saracens despise a superfluity of fame; and their historians scarcely condescend to mention the subordinate conquests which are lost in the splendor and rapidity of their victorious career. To the *north* of Syria they passed Mount Taurus, and reduced to their obedience the province of Cilicia, with its capital Tarsus, the ancient monument of the Assyrian kings. Beyond a second ridge of the same mountains they spread the flame of war, rather than the light of religion, as far as the shores of the Euxine and the neighborhood of Constantinople. To the *east* they advanced to the banks and sources of the Euphrates and Tigris; the long-disputed barrier of Rome and Persia was for ever confounded; the walls of Edessa and Amida, of Dara and Nisibis, which had resisted the arms and engines of Sapor or Nushirvan, were leveled in the dust; and the holy city of Abgarus might vainly produce the epistle or the image of Christ to an unbelieving conqueror. To the *west* the Syrian kingdom is bounded by the sea; and the ruin of Aradus, a small island or peninsula on the coast, was

postponed during ten years. But the hills of Libanus abounded in timber; the trade of Phœnicia was populous in mariners; and a fleet of seventeen hundred barks was equipped and manned by the natives of the desert. The imperial navy of the Romans fled before them from the Pamphyian rocks to the Hellespont; but the spirit of the emperor, a grandson of Heraclius, had been subdued before the combat by a dream and a pun. The Saracens rode masters of the sea; and the islands of Cyprus, Rhodes, and the Cyclades, were successively exposed to their rapacious visits. From his camp in Palestine, Amrou had surprised or anticipated the caliph's leave for the invasion of Egypt. At the head of only four thousand Arabs, the intrepid Amrou had marched away from his station of Gaza, when he was overtaken by the messenger of Omar. 'If you are still in Syria,' said the ambiguous mandate, 'retreat without delay; but if, at the receipt of this epistle, you have already reached the frontiers of Egypt, advance with confidence, and depend on the succor of God and of your brethren.' The experience, perhaps the secret intelligence of Amrou, had taught him to suspect the mutability of courts; and he continued his march till his tents were unquestionably pitched on Egyptian ground. He there assembled his officers, broke the seal, perused the epistle, gravely inquired the name and situation of the place, and declared his ready obedience to the commands of the caliph. After a siege of thirty days, he took possession of Farmah, or Pelusium; and that key of Egypt, as it has been justly named, unlocked the entrance of the country as far as the ruins of Heliopolis and the neighborhood of the modern Cairo. On the western side of the Nile, at a small distance to the east of the Pyramids, at a small distance to the south of the Delta, Memphis, one hundred and fifty furlongs in circumference, displayed the magnificence of

ancient kings. Under the reign of the Ptolemies and Cæsars, the seat of government was removed to the sea-coast; the ancient capital was eclipsed by the arts and opulence of Alexandria; the palaces, and at length the temples, were reduced to a desolate and ruinous condition; yet, in the age of Augustus, and even in that of Constantine, Memphis was still numbered among the greatest and most populous of the provincial cities. The banks of the Nile, in this place of the breadth of three thousand feet, were united by two bridges of sixty and of thirty boats, connected in the middle of the stream by the small island of Ronda, which was covered with gardens and habitations. The eastern extremity of the bridge was terminated by the town of Babylon and the camp of the Roman legion, which protected the passage of the river and the second capital of Egypt. This important fortress, which might fairly be described as a part of Memphis, or *Misrah*, was invested by the arms of the lieutenant of Omar: a reinforcement of four thousand Saracens soon arrived in his camp, and the military engines which battered the walls may be imputed to the art and labor of his Syrian allies. Yet the siege was protracted to seven months, and the rash invaders were encompassed and threatened by the inundation of the Nile. Their last assault was bold and successful: they passed the ditch, which had been fortified with iron spikes, applied their scaling-ladders, entered the fortress with the shout of 'God is victorious!' and drove the remnant of the Greeks to their boats and the isle of Ronda. . . . By the retreat of the Greeks from the provinces of Upper Egypt, a considerable force was collected in the island of Delta; the natural and artificial channels of the Nile afforded a succession of strong and defensible posts; and the road to Alexandria was laboriously cleared by the victory of the Saracens in two-and-twenty days of general or partial combat. In their annals of con-

quest, the siege of Alexandria is, perhaps, the most arduous and important enterprise. The first trading city in the world was abundantly replenished with the means of subsistence and defense. Her numerous inhabitants fought for the dearest of human rights—religion and property; and the enmity of the natives seemed to exclude them from the common benefit of peace and toleration. The sea was continually open; and if Heraclius had been awake to the public distress, fresh armies of Romans and barbarians might have been poured into the harbor to save the second capital of the empire. A circumference of ten miles would have scattered the forces of the Greeks, and favored the stratagems of an active enemy; but the two sides of an oblong square were covered by the sea and the Lake Maræotis, and each of the narrow ends exposed a front of no more than ten furlongs. The efforts of the Arabs were not inadequate to the difficulty of the attempt, and the value of the prize. From the throne of Medina the eyes of Omar were fixed on the camp and the city; his voice excited to arms the Arabian tribes and the veterans of Syria; and the merit of a holy war was recommended by the peculiar fame and fertility of Egypt. Anxious for the ruin or expulsion of their tyrants, the faithful natives devoted their labors to the service of Amrou; some sparks of martial spirit were perhaps rekindled by the example of their allies; and the sanguine hopes of Mokawkas had fixed his sepulcher in the church of St. John of Alexandria. Eutychius, the patriarch, observes, that the Saracens fought with the courage of lions; they repulsed the frequent and almost daily sallies of the besieged, and soon assaulted in their turn the walls and towers of the city. In every attack, the sword, the banner of Amrou, glittered in the van of the Moslems. On a memorable day he was betrayed by his imprudent valor; his followers who had entered the citadel were driven back,

and the general, with a friend and a slave, remained a prisoner in the hands of the Christians. When Amrou was conducted before the prefect, he remembered his dignity and forgot his situation; a lofty demeanor and resolute language revealed the lieutenant of the caliph, and the battle-axe of a soldier was already raised to strike off the head of the audacious captive. His life was saved by the readiness of his slave, who instantly gave his master a blow on the face, and commanded him, with an angry tone, to be silent in the presence of his superiors. The credulous Greek was deceived; he listened to the offer of a treaty, and his prisoners were dismissed in the hope of a more respectable embassy, till the joyful acclamations of the camp announced the return of their general and insulted the folly of the infidels. At length, after a siege of fourteen months, and the loss of three-and-thirty thousand men, the Saracens prevailed; the Greeks embarked their dispirited and diminished numbers, and the standard of Mahomet was planted on the walls of the capital of Egypt. 'I have taken,' said Amrou to the caliph, 'the great city of the West. It is impossible for me to enumerate the variety of its riches and beauty, and I shall content myself with observing, that it contains four thousand palaces, four thousand baths, four hundred theaters or places of amusement, twelve thousand shops for the sale of vegetable food, and forty thousand tributary Jews. The town has been subdued by force of arms, without treaty or capitulation, and the Moslems are impatient to seize the fruits of their victory.' Before Musa would trust an army of the faithful to the traitors and infidels of a foreign land, he made a less dangerous trial of their strength and veracity. One hundred Arabs and four hundred Africans passed over in four vessels from Tangier or Ceuta; the place of their descent on the opposite shore of the strait is marked by the name of Tarif, their

chief, and the date of this memorable event is fixed to the month of Ramadan of the ninety-first year of the Hegira, to the month of July, seven hundred and forty-eight years from the Spanish era of Cæsar, seven hundred and ten after the birth of Christ. From their first station they marched eighteen miles through a hilly country to the castle and town of Julian, on which (it is still called Algezire) they bestowed the name of the Green Island, from a verdant cape that advances into the sea. Their hospitable entertainment, the Christians who joined their standard, their inroad into a fertile and unguarded province, the richness of their spoil, and the safety of their return, announced to their brethren the most favorable omens of victory. In the ensuing spring, five thousand veterans and volunteers were embarked under the command of Tarik, a dauntless and skillful soldier, who surpassed the expectation of his chief, and the necessary transports were provided by the industry of their too faithful ally. The Saracens landed at the pillar or point of Europe; the corrupt and familiar appellation of Gibraltar (Gebel al Tarik) describes the mountain of Tarik, and the entrenchments of his camp were the first outline of those fortifications which, in the hands of our countrymen, have resisted the art and power of the house of Bourbon. The adjacent governors informed the court of Toledo of the descent and progress of the Arabs, and the defeat of the lieutenant Edeco, who had been commanded to seize and bind the presumptuous strangers, admonished Roderic of the magnitude of the danger. At the royal summons, the dukes and counts, the bishops and nobles of the Gothic monarchy, assembled at the head of their followers, and the title of king of the Romans, which is employed by an Arabic historian, may be excused by the close affinity of language, religion, and manners, between the nations of Spain. His army consisted of ninety or a hundred thousand

men; a formidable power, if their fidelity and discipline had been adequate to their numbers. The troops of Tarik had been augmented to twelve thousand Saracens, but the Christian malcontents were attracted by the influence of Julian, and a crowd of Africans most greedily tasted the temporal blessings of the Koran. In the neighborhood of Cadiz, the town of Xeres has been illustrated by the encounter which determined the fate of the kingdom; the stream of Guadalete, which falls into the bay, divided the two camps and marked the advancing and retreating skirmishes of three successive and bloody days. On the fourth day the two armies joined a more serious and decisive issue, but Alaric would have blushed at the sight of his unworthy successor, sustaining on his head a diadem of pearls, encumbered with a flowing robe of gold and silken embroidery, and reclining on a litter or car of ivory drawn by two white mules. Notwithstanding the valor of the Saracens, they fainted under the weight of multitudes, and the plain of Xeres was overspread with sixteen thousand of their dead bodies. 'My brethren,' said Tarik to his surviving companions, 'the enemy is before you, the sea is behind; whither would you fly? Follow your general; I am resolved either to lose my life or to trample on the prostrate king of the Romans.' Besides the resource of despair, he confided in the secret correspondence and nocturnal interviews of Count Julian with the sons and the brother of Witiza. The two princes and the archbishop of Toledo occupied the most important post; their well-timed defection broke the ranks of the Christians; each warrior was prompted by fear or suspicion to consult his personal safety, and the remains of the Gothic army were scattered or destroyed in the flight and pursuit of the three following days. Amidst the general disorder, Roderic started from his car and mounted Orelia, the fleetest of his horses; but he escaped from a

soldier's death to perish more ignobly in the waters of the Boetis or Guadalquiver. His diadem, his robes, and his courser were found on the bank, but as the body of the Gothic prince was lost in the waves, the pride and ignorance of the caliph must have been gratified with some meaner head, which was exposed in triumph before the palace of Damascus. 'And such,' continues the valiant historian of the Arabs, 'is the fate of those kings who withdraw themselves from a field of battle.' The exploits of Musa were performed in the evening of life, though he affected to disguise his age by coloring with a red powder the whiteness of his beard. But in the love of action and glory his breast was still fired with the arder of youth, and the possession of Spain was considered only as the first step to the monarchy of Europe. With a powerful armament by sea and land, he was preparing to repass the Pyrenees, to extinguish in Gaul and Italy the declining kingdoms of the Franks and Lombards, and to preach the unity of God on the altar of the Vatican. From thence, subduing the barbarians of Germany, he proposed to follow the course of the Danube from its source to the Euxine Sea, to overthrow the Greek or Roman empire of Constantinople, and returning from Europe to Asia, to unite his new acquisitions with Antioch and the provinces of Syria. At the end of the first century of the Hegira, the caliphs were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe. Their prerogative was not circumscribed either in right or in fact, by the power of the nobles, the freedom of the commons, the privileges of the church, the votes of the senate, or the memory of a free constitution. The authority of the companions of Mahomet expired with their lives, and the chiefs or emirs of the Arabian tribes left behind in the desert the spirit of equality and independence. The regal and sacerdotal characters were united in the successors of Mahomet, and if the

Koran was the rule of their actions, they were the supreme judges and interpreters of that divine book. They reigned by the right of conquest over the nations of the East, to whom the name of liberty was unknown, and who were accustomed to applaud in their tyrants the acts of violence and severity that were exercised at their own expense. Under the last of the Ommiades, the Arabian empire extended two hundred days' journey from east to west, from the confines of Tartary and India to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. And if we retrench the sleeve of the robe, as it is styled by their writers, the long and narrow province of Africa, the solid and compact dominion from Fargana to Aden, from Tarsus to Surat, will spread on every side to the measure of four or five months of the march of a caravan. We should vainly seek the indissoluble union and easy obedience that pervaded the government of Augustus and the Antonines, but the progress of the Mahometan religion diffused over this ample space a general resemblance of manners and opinions. The language and laws of the Koran were studied with equal devotion at Samarcand and Seville; the Moor and the Indian embraced as countrymen and brothers in the pilgrimage of Mecca, and the Arabian language was adopted as the popular idiom in all the provinces to the westward of the Tigris. In Sicily, the religion of the Greeks was eradicated, and such was the docility of the rising generation, that fifteen thousand boys were circumcised and clothed on the same day with the son of the Fatimite caliph. The Arabian squadrons issued from the harbors of Palermo, Biserta, and Tunis; a hundred and fifty towns of Calabria and Campania were attacked and pillaged; nor could the suburbs of Rome be defended by the name of the Cæsars and apostles. Had the Mahometans been united, Italy must have fallen an easy and glorious accession of the prophet. But the caliphs of Bagdad had

lost their authority in the West, the Aglabites and Fatimites usurped the provinces of Africa, their emirs of Sicily aspired to independence, and the design of conquest and dominion was degraded to a repetition of predatory inroads. In the sufferings of prostrate Italy the name of Rome awakens a solemn and mournful recollection. A fleet of Saracens from the African coast presumed to enter the mouth of the Tiber, and to approach a city which even yet, in her fallen state, was revered as the metropolis of the Christian world. The gates and ramparts were guarded by a trembling people, but the tombs and temples of St. Peter and St. Paul were left exposed in the suburbs of the Vatican and of the Ostian way. Their invisible sanctity had protected them against the Goths, the Vandals, and the Lombards; but the Arabs disdained both the gospel and the legend, and their rapacious spirit was approved and animated by the precepts of the Koran. The Christian *idols* were stripped of their costly offerings, a silver altar was torn away from the shrine of St. Peter, and if the bodies or the buildings were left entire, their deliverance must be imputed to the haste rather than the scruples of the Saracens. In their course along the Appian way, they pillaged Fundi and besieged Gaeta; but they had turned aside from the walls of Rome, and by their divisions, the capital was saved from the yoke of the prophet of Mecca. The same danger still impended on the heads of the Roman people, and their domestic force was unequal to the assault of an African emir. They claimed the protection of their Latin sovereign, but the Carlovingian standard was overthrown by a detachment of the barbarians; they meditated the restoration of the Greek emperors; but the attempt was treasonable, and the succor remote and precarious. Their distress appeared to receive some aggravation from the death of their spiritual and temporal chief; but the press-

ing emergency superseded the forms and intrigues of an election; and the unanimous choice of Pope Leo IV., was the safety of the church and city. This pontiff was born a Roman; the courage of the first ages of the republic glowed in his breast; and amidst the ruins of his country, he stood erect, like one of the firm and lofty columns that rear their heads above the fragments of the Roman forum. The first days of his reign were consecrated to the purification and removal of relics, to prayers and processions, and to all the solemn offices of religion, which served at least to heal the imagination and restore the hopes of the multitude. The public defense had been long neglected, not from the presumption of peace, but from the distress and poverty of the times. As far as the scantiness of his means and the shortness of his leisure would allow, the ancient walls were repaired by the command of Leo; fifteen towers in the most accessible stations were built or renewed; two of these commanded on either side of the Tiber, and an iron chain was drawn across the stream to impede the ascent of a hostile navy. The Romans were assured of a short respite by the welcome news that the siege of Gaeta had been raised, and that a part of the enemy, with their sacrilegious plunder, had perished in the waves. But the storm which had been delayed soon burst upon them with redoubled violence. The Aglabite, who reigned in Africa, had inherited from his father a treasure and an army; a fleet of Arabs and Moors, after a short refreshment in the harbors of Sardinia, cast anchor before the mouth of the Tiber, sixteen miles from the city; and their discipline and numbers appeared to threaten not a transient inroad, but a serious design of conquest and dominion. But the vigilance of Leo had formed an alliance with the vassals of the Greek empire, the free and maritime states of Gaeta, Naples, and Amalfi; and in the hour of danger their galleys appeared in the port of

Ostia under the command of Cæsarius, the son of the Neapolitan duke, a noble and valiant youth, who had already vanquished the fleets of the Saracens. With his principal companions, Cæsarius was invited to the Lateran palace, and the dexterous pontiff affected to inquire their errand, and to accept with joy and surprise their providential succor. The city bands, in arms, attended their father to Ostia, where he reviewed and blessed his generous deliverers. They kissed his feet, received the communion with martial devotion, and listened to the prayer of Leo, that the same God who had supported St. Peter and St. Paul on the waves of the sea, would strengthen the hands of his champions against the adversaries of his holy name. After a similar prayer, and with equal resolution, the Moslems advanced to the attack of the Christian galleys, which preserved their advantageous station along the coast. The victory inclined to the side of the allies, when it was less gloriously decided in their favor by a sudden tempest, which confounded the skill and courage of the stoutest mariners. The Christians were sheltered in a friendly harbor, while the Africans were scattered and dashed in pieces among the rocks and islands of a hostile shore. Those who escaped from shipwreck and hunger, neither found nor deserved mercy at the hands of their pursuers. The sword and the gibbet reduced the dangerous multitude of captives, and the remainder was more usefully employed to restore the sacred edifices which they had attempted to subvert. . . . The Emperor Theophilus, son of Michael the Stammerer, was one of the most active and high-spirited princes of the middle age. . . . From Tarsus, the place of assembly, the Saracens advanced in three divisions along the high road of Constantinople; Motassem himself commanded the center, and the vanguard was given to his son Abbas, who, in the trial of the

first adventurers, might succeed with the more glory, or fail with the least reproach. In the revenge of his injury, the caliph prepared to retaliate a similar affront. The father of Theophilus was a native of Amorium in Phrygia; the original seat of the imperial house had been adorned with privileges and monuments; and, whatever might be the indifference of the people, Constantinople itself was scarcely of more value in the eyes of the sovereign and his court. The name of AMORIUM was inscribed on the shields of the Saracens; and their three armies were again united under the walls of the devoted city. It had been proposed by the wisest counselors to evacuate Amorium, to remove the inhabitants, and to abandon the empty structures to the vain resentment of the barbarians. The emperor embraced the more generous resolution of defending in a siege and battle the country of his ancestors. When the armies drew near, the front of the Mahometan line appeared to a Roman eye more closely planted with spears and javelins; but the event of the action was not glorious on either side to the national troops. The Arabs were broken, but it was by the swords of thirty thousand Persians, who had obtained service and settlement in the Byzantine empire. The Greeks were repulsed and vanquished, but it was by the arrows of the Turkish cavalry; and had not their bow-strings been damped and relaxed by the evening rain, very few of the Christians could have escaped with the emperor from the field of battle. They breathed at Dorylæum, at the distance of three days; and Theophilus, reviewing his trembling squadrons, forgave the common flight both of the prince and people. After this discovery of his weakness, he vainly hoped to deprecate the fate of Amorium; the inexorable caliph rejected with contempt his prayers and promises, and detained the Roman ambassadors to be the witnesses of his great revenge. They had nearly been the witnesses of

his shame. The vigorous assaults of fifty-five days were encountered by a faithful governor, a veteran garrison, and a desperate people; and the Saracens must have raised the siege if a domestic traitor had not pointed to the weakest part of the wall, a place which was decorated with the statues of a lion and a bull. The vow of Motassem was accomplished with unrelenting rigor; tired rather than satiated with destruction, he returned to his new palace at Samaria, in the neighborhood of Bagdad, while the *unfortunate* Theophilus implored the tardy and doubtful aid of his Western rival, the emperor of the Franks. Yet in the siege of Amorium above seventy thousand Moslems had perished; their loss had been revenged by the slaughter of thirty thousand Christians, and the sufferings of an equal number of captives, who were treated as the most atrocious criminals. Mutual necessity could sometimes extort the exchange or ransom of prisoners; but in the national and religious conflict of the two empires, peace was without confidence, and war without mercy. Quarter was seldom given in the field; those who escaped the edge of the sword were condemned to hopeless servitude or exquisite torture; and a Catholic emperor relates, with visible satisfaction, the execution of the Saracens of Crete, who were flayed alive, or plunged into caldrons of boiling oil. To a point of honor Motassem had sacrificed a flourishing city, two hundred thousand lives, and the property of millions. The same caliph descended from his horse, and dirtied his robe, to relieve the distress of a decrepit old man, who, with his laden ass, had tumbled into a ditch. On which of these actions did he reflect with the most pleasure when he was summoned by the angel of death? With Motassem, the eighth of the Abbassides, the glory of his family and nation expired. When the Arabian conquerors had spread themselves over the East, and were mingled with the servile crowds of Per-

sia, Syria, and Egypt, they insensibly lost the free-born and martial virtues of the desert. The courage of the South is the artificial fruit of discipline and prejudice; the active power of enthusiasm had decayed, and the mercenary forces of the caliphs were recruited in those climates of the North, of which valor is the hardy and spontaneous production. Of the Turks who dwelt beyond the Oxus and Jaxartes, the robust youths, either taken in war or purchased in trade, were educated in the exercises of the field and the profession of the Mahometan faith. The Turkish guards stood in arms round the throne of their benefactor, and their chiefs usurped the dominion of the palace and the provinces. . . . As often as the Turks were inflamed by fear, or rage, or avarice, these caliphs were dragged by the feet, exposed naked to the scorching sun, beaten with iron clubs, and compelled to purchase, by the abdication of their dignity, a short reprieve of inevitable fate. At length, however, the fury of the tempest was spent or diverted; the Abbassides returned to the less turbulent residence of Bagdad; and the insolence of the Turks was curbed with a firmer and more skillful hand, and their numbers were divided and destroyed in foreign warfare. But the nations of the East had been taught to trample on the successors of the Prophet; and the blessings of domestic peace were obtained by the relaxation of strength and discipline. So uniform are the mischiefs of military despotism, that I seem to repeat the story of the pretorians of Rome." We do not attempt to fix, definitely, the points beginning and ending the five months—prophetic time—of the depredations of the locusts, or the invasion of Christendom by the Mohammedans; but it is a fact well known to history, that the Saracen power of the sword continued for a period of about a century and a half. And, also, that, powerful as it was, it did not crush out, kill, or entirely destroy, Christianity, or the power of truth.

12 One woe is past; *and*, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

Verse 12 *One woe is past*;—The boundary-lines fixed and established by Divine Providence, restraining the usurpations and oppressions of men over their fellows, are as absolute as those restraining the sea, saying, Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. And so it was with the Mohammedan power over Christian principle and civil liberty in Christian countries. That woe is past. And, *behold, there come two woes more hereafter*.—Not quickly, or immediately; but, indefinitely, *hereafter*.

Verse 13 *And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God*,—This voice of authority, from a pure and holy source, is nothing less than the voice of Divine Providence.

Verse 14 *Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates*.—The great Euphrates was long the boundary-line, and quite an effectual barrier, between the nations of the East and the more free and independent tribes of the West. And as this was actually true of this river, it seems to be employed here as a most appropriate figure to represent the great ocean—the broad Atlantic—which afterward became a more effectual barrier against the westward march of empire and of religion. These *four angels* seem to be the spirit of conquest for empire, the spirit of fanatical superstition for the propagation and establishment of re-

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

ligious opinions; or, rather, the spirit of intolerance in religion; the spirit of polytheism, presumptuously and impiously invading the sacred truth of the divine unity, and the spirit of infidelity. These restless, vile spirits, impatient of restraint even by the great waters of the illimitable ocean, (for it was so regarded at that time,) having overrun the then known world, may be regarded as standing on the western shore of the old world. And when by the great genius and indefatigable energy of Christopher Columbus the new world was discovered, this great ocean barrier, though not removed, was found to be surmountable. And these *four angels*, or restless, enterprising spirits, accompanying the colonists from Spain, England, and other countries of the old world, passed over; not, however, abandoning their work in the old, but extending it into the new world also.

Verse 15 *And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.*—And the king—over the locusts—was faithful and true to his nature, and his name (destroyer) in prompting and preparing these his industrious servants to slay within a period of near four hundred years *the third part of men.* For an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year—prophetic time—make three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days. But whether these four distinctly named and measured periods follow each other in immediate consecutive order of time, and so become one period, we pretend not now to determine. As the wars which followed the loosing of these angels were not between pagans and Christians, we are more inclined to the opinion

16 And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

that *the third part of men* is the nominally Christian part of earth's population; and that these men, under the influence of these diabolical spirits, are fiendishly at work in slaying each other; but this slaughter does not exterminate the men, as we shall see in verse 20. And that this work of destruction among Christians, by their greatly improved weapons of destruction, and highly refined Christian warfare, advanced to the front rank in sanguinary scenes of destruction at a point of time anterior to the present, and that it will maintain its rank, perhaps, for some time yet to come.

Verse 16 *And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.*—The idea is very humiliating to a Christian man; but this verse seems to represent the Christian world, at this period in its history, as one vast army in battle array, to be reviewed and numbered. And why is it thus represented? Because it had become greatly addicted to war and bloodshed. And we shall be more fully convinced that this is the meaning of the passage, as we proceed to examine the figures by which their mode of warfare and their implements of death are represented. *Two hundred thousand thousand*; that is, two hundred million was at that time about one-third of mankind, and was about the nominally Christian proportion of the world's population.

Verse 17 *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth,*

18 By these three was the third part of men killed; by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails:

and brimstone:—The ancient defensive armor—the breast-plate, helmet, and shield—has been almost entirely laid aside as cumbersome and almost useless; and the ardent zeal, the boiling blood, and the inflammable passion for victory and glory, not inappropriately represented in the text by *fire*, *jacinth*, or hyacinth, the red variety of zircon, and *brimstone*, have been adopted in their stead, as the warrior relies for his own defense on the swift destruction of his foe. The following highly figurative language well represents fire-arms, especially artillery; *The heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone*. And now, who can read this verse without seeing the appropriateness and strength of the figures, and the justness of their application to the mode of Christian warfare?

Verse 18 *By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths*.—Anciently, when a great slaughter was made by a general engagement between two great armies, it was done by a hand-to-hand conflict; whereas, since the invention of gunpowder and fire-arms, especially with the vast improvements in the fire-arms of the nineteenth century, and the clandestine operations of mining and laying torpedoes, the wholesale work of death is now accomplished by the explosive force of that powerful agent, gunpowder, when confined in these instruments of death, by ball, shot, and shell, which it sends forth so furiously out of their mouths, as to cut down and kill every one in their way.

Verse 19 *For their power is in their mouth, and in their*

for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood ; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk :

tails : for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.—The description here descends to wonderful minuteness of detail. In the tail, or breech of the gun, lies concealed this subtle power, not inappropriately represented by the poison of the serpent, which lies concealed in its mouth, or in its tail ; and from the breech of the gun this wonderful power sends forth these heads, the ball, shot, and shell, through the mouth or muzzle of the gun, and with them they do hurt.

Verse 20 *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands,*—The rest of these same men, the third, the nominally Christian portion of mankind, which were not killed by these plagues in the wholesale slaughters above represented, yet repented not of the works of their hands ; for even these professedly Christian men are too much addicted to idolatry—too much addicted to worshiping at the shrine of evil spirits—to giving a loose rein to their passions, and to setting their affections upon earthly treasures—upon all manner of things, from the purest gold even to furniture of the most common wood ; whereas all earthly treasures should be enjoyed and appreciated, as conveniences and blessings, granted us for temporary use, and by the proper employment of which we may and should become useful to others, while the supreme affections should be fixed upon, and the devout adorations of the soul should be given to, God alone.

21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Verse 21 *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*—The four crimes so distinctly stated here, of which living Christians have not yet repented, for they have not turned from them, even after the untold, unprecedented, and almost entirely incredible losses of life and of property, and the fearful hazard of every dear privilege by them, so perfectly correspond to the vile spirits prompting them, which are described in the note on verse 14, that we cannot fail to see the connection between them; for the killing of men in war is murder, and this wholesale murder is kept up by sorcery, or fanaticism, so magically enchanting in its effects, as to lead men on, in this murderous work, even in the name of religion. And fornication, which is idolatry—and this the fruitful source of superstition—is the parent of fanaticism. And after man has laid violent hands upon the life of his fellow, his brother, and by fanatical superstition become a worshiper of other objects besides God, it requires but one step more, and he is prepared to make the attempt, with his sacrilegious hands, to drag God from his throne, and to place upon that throne human reason, or some other idol, which commands his supreme regard, and thus to rob God of his honor and glory, which he emphatically says he will not give to another. And now if this robbery is not theft, in its worst form, we know not what can constitute it.

CHAPTER X.

1 *A mighty angel appeareth with a book open in his hand.* 6 *He sweareth by him that liveth for ever, that time shall be no longer.* 8 *John is commanded to take and eat the book.*

AND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud : and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire :

2 And he had in his hand a little book open : and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his* left foot on the earth,

NOTES.—CHAPTER X.

Verse 1 *And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud.*—This *mighty angel* is most undoubtedly the Lord Jesus Christ ; and his coming down from heaven was his incarnation. The *cloud* with which he was *clothed* was the great cloud of witnesses who testify of him, for unto him gave all the prophets witness, for he came by promise, and the bow of promise was *upon his head*, and *his face was as it were the sun*, and *his feet as pillars of fire* :—So few readers will turn to and read parallel texts, that we transcribe some here : *His eyes were as a flame of fire ; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass. And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.* With these texts before us, who can doubt that this *mighty angel* is the Son of God ?

Verse 2 *And he had in his hand a little book open.*—This *little book* is the last volume of God's revelation to man, as we shall see more clearly in verse 7. And it is truly said to be *open in his hand* ; for he himself began to teach and to preach before he was crucified, the pure, the holy, the sublime truths of his gospel, his mission, his work of completing the revealment of God's person, his nature, (so far as man is capable of understanding it,) and his will ; and he selected, commissioned, and sent forth his disciples to teach the same. And a select number of these disciples, by inspiration of God, committed to record the *little book*—

3 And cried with a loud voice, as *when a lion roareth*: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

the New Testament Scriptures—which was *open* in the *hand* of their Divine Master. The placing of *his right foot upon the sea*, here indicates peculiar favor to the church, as the laying of *his right hand upon* the apostle did in chap. i. 17, and it is also indicative of authority and power; and *his left foot upon the earth*, is indicative of his authority and power over government as well as church.

Verse 3 *And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth*:—This well represents the strong commanding voice of authority; for, He spake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.—*And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices*.—The voice of thunder in the clouds of heaven, more fitly represents the authoritative, commanding voice of God, than any other sound in hearing of this world, and seven of these indicate perfect, unlimited authority.

Verse 4 *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write*:—It seems that the apostle understood the language of these voices of thunder, for he *was about to write*: but hark!—*and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not*.—God does not seem to have employed any agent, through whom to utter this authoritative voice, restraining the apostle from writing. As the apostle is commanded to *seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered*, we may not know, in time, what those things were, but by studying the three following verses we may learn that they spake in reference to the end of time.

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when

Verse 5 *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven*,—This Divine Messenger has a most important message for both church and government, and he delivers it in the most solemn and impressive manner.

Verse 6 *And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever*,—This affirmation is in the name of Him who is independent and eternal in his own existence, and who also is the great Author of all being, the Creator of all places, and of all things which exist in all places, specified here by *heaven, earth, and the sea, and the things which are therein*. And now, what is this message? That the time is not yet; that is, the time of the end. The learned of our own times agree in saying that this is the meaning of the original, and not *that there shall be time no longer*, as in the text of our authorized English version. And why is this message so vitally important? Because, if men believe that time is at an end, they will not meet the responsibilities of life, of time, religiously or socially; hence they will neither be good Christians nor good citizens. And so we see that, notwithstanding the distinct utterances of the *voice of the seven thunders* have been sealed up, so that we may not know when the end shall be, of this much, however, we are assured, that the time is not yet; hence, so far as we are concerned, it matters not whether it is near or very remote.

Verse 7 *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel*,

he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished,—The voice of the seventh angel ushers in the perfecting era of the world, for the Christian age is the last time. This period may be a very long one, but it shall not be succeeded by another, for in it the mystery of God shall be finished. And without controversy great is the *mystery* of godliness; but it has been made plainer than it ever was before, for by the coming of Christ, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit—by many infallible signs—seen of angels—his messengers, his ministers, who were witnesses of the miracles which he did, and who even saw him after he had risen from the dead—preached unto the Gentiles—contrary to the prejudices of those to whom previous revelations had been made, believed on in the world—for Christianity is destined to succeed—received up into glory—and he himself shall be the glory, the light of the New Jerusalem. The coming of this true light had been previously declared to his servants the prophets. To see still more clearly, if possible, that in this era, by the revelations of this *angel, the mystery of God shall be finished*; and that he is the seen, the recognized, the acknowledged, and the declared of his messengers, we have only to turn to and read the language of this apostolic prophet, in the character of an apostle, in his first General Epistle, commencing with chap. i. 1: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go *and* take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take *it*, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.'●

Verse 8 *And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open*—The command is reasonable, and the duty plain: when the book of God's revelation is open and presented, to take it.

Verse 9 *And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up*;—The eighth and ninth verses, addressed with so much commanding emphasis to St. Johu, address themselves with great force to all who would be standard-bearers of the Cross. They should suffer no leaf in the *little book* to be unturned, or only casually read; but every thing in it, with all the available helps to understand it, should be attentively, carefully, laboriously studied, yea, even devoured—eaten up; that they may know (so far as finite minds can comprehend) and teach the truth of God, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. And thus to know God by the revelation of his Son Jesus Christ, is most joyous, even the fullness of joy; it is *sweet*. But being thus introduced into the knowledge, the light of God discovers self;

10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

the imperfections, the frailties, the corruptions, the vileness, of poor, fallen human nature, and extorts the cry, Who shall deliver me from this body of death? It is a bitterness to the truly awakened soul:—*and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.*

Verse 10 *And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up;*—We have only to turn to and read again 1 John i. 1, to see that this apostle had, most effectually, devoured the little book. It cannot be unprofitable here to read all of St. John's Epistles.

Verse 11 *And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*—And so this apostle, by his inspired writings, has already become, and still is destined to be, a most efficient teacher of many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings; for these, with the other inspired writings, have already been translated into many tongues, or languages, and sent to many nations, and have instructed kings. And here the reader would do well to turn to and read very carefully John xiv. xv., 1 John i. iii., and Rev. i.; and then all of his Gospel, all of his three Epistles, and all of the Revelation.

CHAPTER XI.

1 *The two witnesses prophesy.* 6 *They have power to shut heaven, that it rain not.* 7 *The beast shall fight against them, and kill them.* 8 *They lie unburied, 11 and after three days and a half rise again.* 14 *The second woe is past.* 15 *The seventh trumpet soundeth.*

AND there was given me a reed like unto a rod : and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not ; for it is given unto the Gentiles : and

NOTES.—CHAPTER XI.

Verse 1 *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod :—* St. John having received the *little book* and devoured it, as he was commanded to do, and having been commanded to teach the nations in the preceding chapter, he here receives a rule by which to *measure the temple of God, the altar, and the worshippers* ; but is charged *not to measure the court without the temple* by this rule. And this apostle, after having fully digested the last, the perfect revelation of God's will to man, is eminently qualified for this work, under the supervision of the angel of the covenant—the new covenant—which is kept by faith, for this is the same *angel* who in the preceding chapter *stood upon the sea, and upon the earth, and cried with a loud voice*, in commanding his creatures. And that he supervises this work is very clear, for *the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.*—*The temple of God* here represents the church of God, and is to be understood here in that broad, comprehensive sense, which includes all Christendom, as *the outer court* represents all the Gentile world ; and *the altar* here represents the worship in the Christian church generally ; and *them that worship* in this *temple*, all worshippers in Christendom. And this rule, or test of Christian faith and conduct, represented by a *reed like unto a rod*, is the highest standard of God's requirements of those who aspire to his favor and a home in heaven, for the true light now shines.

Verse 2 *But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not ; for it is given unto the Gentiles :—The*

the holy city shall they tread under foot forty *and* two months.

3 And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

application of the Christian standard to Christian people, only, is in accordance with the tenor of Scripture, and is every way reasonable, for even those Gentiles who went up to Jerusalem to worship, were in their approach limited to the outer court of the temple; much more, shall not the Gentile nations, which are entirely without the pale of Christendom, be judged by the Christian standard; but God in his providence shall wield them, as a scourge, with which to chastise Christians for a long period. *And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*—The figure is slightly varied, but *holy city* here means the same as *temple of God*, in the first verse. *Forty and two months*—prophetic time—which is twelve hundred and sixty years. This applies to the dark ages of Christianity.

Verse 3 *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*—These *two witnesses* which are here claimed by the angel, the Lord Jesus Christ, as being his own, and are preserved by his providence from destruction, though so many dark clouds have passed over them, seem to be the pure principles of true religion, and the sound and just principles of good government; and these are truly the most important witnesses of the divinity of Christ, and of the pure benevolence of his mission to man; and they are both destined to be fully developed and firmly established by his wisdom and authority, by his power and grace; and these, when fully developed and established, shall teach man to know God and his own interests as he should; but during this long dark period of twelve hundred and sixty years

4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

they *prophesied*, or taught, what little they did teach, *clothed in sackcloth*. But if the reader is still inclined to doubt whether church and government are these *two witnesses*, he is invited to pass with us to the next verse.

Verse 4 *These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth*.—This verse is evidently given by the apostle to explain the preceding one; then the question of *the witnesses* resolves itself into this: What do the *olive trees* and *candlesticks* represent? All Bible readers know that *candlesticks* represent *churches*, but what do the *olive trees* represent? In the Apocalypse, trees of the forest represent kings, princes, governors, or other rulers of pagan nations; hence, this cultivated, domesticated *oil-bearing tree*, may represent the ruler of Christian people, and, to agree with the other parts of the figure, it may represent a Christian government; and that these are the *two witnesses* is quite clear, and that they testify of Christ, for they are here *standing before the God of the earth*.—And standing connected, as all this does, with developments in the Roman empire, we apply the *two olive trees* to the eastern and western divisions of that empire; and the *two candlesticks* to the Greek and Latin divisions of the church of that period.

Verse 5 *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies*:—Domestic enemies are always the worst foes of church and state, and as their appropriate name-men is used in chap. ix. 4, and in other places, to distinguish between the taught of God and pagans, represented there by *trees, grass of the earth*,

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the

and other *green things*, so any man here, or any Christian, who will be so unnatural as to hurt the church of which he is a member, or the government of which he is a citizen, which are the most important, yea, indispensable institutions for his own protection and salvation, acts as a man who sets fire to his own house and remains in it, or rather, as the mariner who sets fire to his ship from which he cannot escape; for *if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed*.

Verse 6 *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy*:—It is in the power of the membership, which is the church, to so seal it up, and neutralize or destroy its influence for good, that it shed no fruitful showers of blessings upon the thirsty earth. As trees and grass of the earth represent pagans, so waters, great waters, clouds, and showers of rain, represent Christians and multitudes of Christians, which, when they are what Christians should be, are the greatest blessings on earth; but, in these days, few such showers of blessings were poured upon the thirsty earth. And while good citizens of a Christian government are a blessing to their own government, their example is a blessing to the pagan world. But notwithstanding all this is true of pure Christianity, the corrupt Roman government and church, at this time, become the destroyers of its own members and citizens, and a grievous plague to the anti-Christian world—for they *have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will*.

Verse 7 *And when they shall have finished their testimony,*

beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.—

The Christian church and government of Rome seem to have found their destiny about the same time. In other words, the fall of the Roman empire and the establishment of Protestantism were simultaneous ; and the Christian church and Christian government were no longer dependent upon their feeble testimony, but they themselves were abandoned to the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit—the angel of the bottomless pit—the *great red dragon, which made war against them, and overcame them, and killed them.* It is true, many spasmodic efforts for reform in the Roman church and government had been made before ; and many, very many, good men had lived and labored in them ; but they were past recovery, and the providence of God saw fit to abandon them to Satan. And these important *witnesses*, the Christian religion and Christian government, lived again in other and better hands.

Verse 8 *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city,*—These *witnesses*, the pure principles of true religion, and of sound and just government, must always have corporeal bodies in which to exist and act, and bear their testimony to their author and patron, and through which to operate on human society. These bodies, the church and empire of Rome, through which they have borne their feeble testimony, are at last dead, and lie exposed, not quietly upon the commons, but in the great thoroughfares, *in the street of the great city.* *The great city* represents the church of God. It has been so represented by theologians and

9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11 And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

poets of all ages; especially is it so represented in the sacred songs of the inspired David. Nor need we be greatly surprised at its corruption, its vileness, its degradation, in these long years of great darkness; for in it our Lord found a cross on which to suffer. *Spiritually it is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

Verse 9 *And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half,—* It is with intense interest that all pagan nations and people everywhere look upon the defunct state of Rome as a church and empire. And all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, enjoy the triumph over Rome more, as she exists nominally and without power, than if she were annihilated. And for three years and a half do they look upon the abhorred religion and government as being entirely suppressed.

Verse 10 *And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another;—* The rejoicings, the merriment, the mutual congratulations, become general and excessive, *because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*—And, indeed, the power of Rome had been great, and had been widely extended and rigorously exercised, regally and sacerdotally.

Verse 11 *And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their*

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and

feet;—To understand all this clearly, and to avoid confusion of ideas, we must remember that the important pronouns, in this extensive connection, have two very prominent antecedents, which are very intimately identified, though not absolutely identical. These antecedents are the two witnesses, which are the pure spirit of true religion and the equal and just principles of good government; and the two olive trees, and two candlesticks, which are the eastern and western divisions of the empire and church of Rome. After the dead bodies of the latter had lain in the street of the great city three days and a half, the former, not being dependent upon mortal agencies for life, the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet. Protestantism and Christian government being now firmly established, separate from and independent of Rome, which, when the pagan world discovered, undeceived them as to the real death of their foes, and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

Verse 12 *And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither.*—This great voice of Providence is from his pure Church unto these his witnesses, which had been so long in sackcloth, inviting them to come up out of Rome into Protestant light and liberty. *And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud;*—They ascended up from the murky waters of a corrupt sea to the pure waters of heaven in a cloud—the multitude of pure Protestants, who sustained the Reformation—*and their enemies beheld them.*—These enemies are quite numerous—the adherents to Rome and all the pagan world.

Verse 13 *And the same hour was there a great earth-*

the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe is past; *and*, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

quake,—Simultaneously with all this was there a great revolution, represented here by an *earthquake*. And in the unavoidable confusion and danger of this great revolution, it was truly fortunate, yea, providential, that no more than a *tenth part of the city*—the true church of the living and true God—*fell*. Those who fell are those who, though true believers in the pure doctrines of the Reformation, gave way under the fierceness of persecution, and, in view of the terrors of a violent death, fell from their own steadfastness. And such a perfectly round number fell martyrs to the truth, that they are even represented here by a number of thousands denoting perfection. And truly these were men, true believers, who remained true to the end. *And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand*:—And those who escaped with their lives, without sacrificing their honor, and the truth together, though greatly alarmed at the danger, ceased not to glorify God for their protection, and by teaching the truth in the face of danger. *And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven*.

Verse 14 *The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly*.—The first of the three woes being the Saracen invasion, and the overwhelmingly great and destructive Christian wars, with the declension in religion, and the fierceness of persecution, together, constituting the second, they are both now past; if, indeed, any part of the scenes of the tenth, and the preceding part of this, the eleventh chapter, is presented, as constituting part of the second woe, it is now past. And, *behold, the third woe cometh quickly*.—A failure upon the part of interpreters to

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

discern the use that is made so frequently, or at least several times, in this prophecy, of the word *quickly*, has led them into insurmountable difficulties. *The third woe shall most assuredly come.*

Verse 15 *And the seventh angel sounded*;—As the opening of the seventh seal, to finish or complete the work of all the rest, commences with the full development of Christianity, when Christ himself said, It is finished, and extends over all the ground occupied by the other six, so the sounding of the seventh angel sweeps over all the ground occupied by the previous six trumpets, and over the whole Christian era. The reader is here requested to read again the note on verse 7, chap. x. *And there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ*;—These great voices in the church were the voice of the Son of God, who spake as never man spake; the convincing voice of miracles, in which the laws of nature were suspended, and men saw many things which could be accomplished only by direct Almighty power; the voice of pure, fully revealed, and unadulterated truth; and the voice of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from Joseph's new tomb, certified by all the apostles and above five hundred brethren. And all these voices taught, as the voice of the prophet had done before them, that the stone cut out of God's holy mountain without hands was destined to fill the whole world—*saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*—Through all time, and in eternity.

16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Verse 16 *And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,*—These elders are the representatives of all those who are instructed by these great voices, and other instrumentalities, in the knowledge of God, and the true worship; and they, being teachers, lead the devotions of all who have the seal of God in their foreheads; that is, the knowledge of the truth.

Verse 17 *Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come;*—These elders well represent all true believers in evincing the deepest gratitude for the privilege of knowing and of worshipping the Almighty and Eternal God in the midst of an idolatrous world. The reign of truth in religion, and righteousness among men, can only be established by divine power. But these were days of power, as we have seen in verse 15, as well as in these words, *Because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*

Verse 18 *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come,*—The nations seem to have apprehended that when Messiah should come he would assume regal authority, and reign as a temporal prince; for the language of prophecy concerning him was so understood. *And the nations were much displeased at the prospect of having to yield up their*

19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

scepters to the Lord's Christ. And the displeasure of Christ is clearly manifested by his teachings, and his sharp rebukes against the course of things, as he found them in this world, especially against the dead formalities in the church. And he pronounced sentence against the vile hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees. And in his Almighty hand is found and presented a full *reward* to all the faithful prophets; and *sainted* ones, who received no adequate reward for their fidelity and services in this life. And for all *them that fear thy name*, and eschew idolatry, *small and great*.—And if after man is favored with the perfect light of revealed truth, instead of contributing to construct the temple of truth, he continue to be a destroyer, he shall as certainly be *destroyed* as that the righteous shall be rewarded.

Verse 19 *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament*:—If a more sublimely grand assemblage of imagery than this is anywhere drawn and presented by the pencil of inspiration, respecting the perfect revelation of truth by Jesus Christ, it is found at the beginning of the next chapter. This verse has special reference to the presentation and preservation of the evidences of the truth and divinity of his mission; the opening of *the temple of God* in the church is the revealment of truth by Christ, and the *ark* is indicative of the sacred care that is exercised over his testimonials. And it contains and preserves the revealed will or *testament* of the Divine Testator, as the ark in the most holy place in the temple at Jerusalem contained and preserved the tables

of the law, the shew-bread, the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. *Lightnings* represent the moral and intellectual illuminations which flashed upon man's darkness by the revealments of this, the last and perfect revelation of God's truth to man. These *voices* are the distinct utterances, inspired and clear, by which these revealments are taught and made plain. *Thunderings* represent the loudness and solemnity of these appeals and warnings. And it is not surprising that the result of all this should be *an earthquake*—a revolution. As *waters* represent people, and *great waters* multitudes of people; so the pure waters of heaven represent true believers in these perfect revelations; and their congealment into hailstones, and the increased force of waters thus congealed, represent the union and concert of action among believers in the first ages of Christianity. *And there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*—The reader is again referred to chap. x. 7, and to verse 15 of this chapter, and the notes on them.

CHAPTER XII.

- 1 *A woman clothed with the sun travaileth.* 4 *The great red dragon standeth before her, ready to devour her child.* 6 *Having been delivered, she fleeth into the wilderness.* 7 *Michael and his angels fight with the dragon, and prevail.* 13 *The dragon being cast down into the earth, persecuteth the woman.*

AND there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

NOTES.—CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1 *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven;—* The revelations which God has made of himself to man, of

2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

man's duty to him, and of his will concerning man, are truly wonderful, entirely above and beyond man's capacity to attain unto without direct revelation from God. And the most wonderful of these is the last and perfect revelation which he has made by Jesus Christ. And this is represented here in a manner most wonderfully sublime, by representing the church by *a woman* who, in her chastity and loveliness, is the most angel-like of all God's creatures on earth, clothed in light so dazzling and powerful that man cannot behold with steadfast gaze. This light is the perfect revealment of truth by Jesus Christ. And this brilliantly attired *woman* has the modest, the beautiful *moon*, for her footstool. The *moon* represents the revelation made to Moses, which received its light from the promised Messiah, and reflected it. And her head was decked with a sparkling *crown of twelve stars*:—These represent the twelve apostles of the Lamb. *A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.*

Verse 2 *And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*—The church being clothed with divine light, was pregnant with truth; and as the prophet's commission was so ardent as to be like fire in his bones, so she was *pained to be delivered.*

Verse 3 *And there appeared another wonder in heaven*;—As the great wonder in the first verse surpassed all that is human in its excellence, so this other wonder surpassed what is human in its vileness: that was truth revealed by Christ; this was error, or antichrist. *A great red dragon, having*

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth : and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.—These *seven crowned heads* represent the whole or complete number of the angels, or evil spirits, employed by the *dragon* to oppose truth ; and the *ten horns* the indefinite round number of human agencies employed for the same purpose ; and as the heads were crowned, they ruled or controlled the actions of the horns.

Verse 4 *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth :—*By the evil influences of diabolical spirits and bad men, the dragon, the many-headed monster that opposes truth, drew *the third part*—a very considerable proportion—*of the stars of heaven*—the ministers of religion—and *did cast them to the earth :—*rendered them earthly, sensual, and devilish. And not content with perverting the minds and hearts, and counteracting the influence of the teachers of truth and righteousness, the dragon would, if he could, destroy truth itself. *And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.*

Verse 5 *And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron :—*The church was eminently successful in the first ages of Christianity in developing the truth. The truth is here personified ; and Christ himself hesitates not to say to his disciples, I am the way, the truth, and the life. This clause—*who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron :—*compared with chap. ii. 24–27, inclusive, teaches the important truth, that after all

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and threescore* days.

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

mild and persuasive means have, in the providence of God, been mercifully, kindly, and faithfully employed, to convert all idolatrous nations, those nations which persistently adhere to paganism shall be ruled, broken to shivers, or subdued, with a rod of iron; for the truth must and will ultimately triumph over error. The apostle in this vision saw *her child caught up unto God, and to his throne*—where and when truth shall reign—Christ shall reign triumphantly.

Verse 6 *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God,*—The church of God has always been the object of his special regard and care; and in her flight from Christian Jerusalem to pagan Rome, and after her arrival in this wilderness, and during the long and dreary period of her sojourn there, and even amid the apparent triumph of error over her throughout the dark ages, she never was for a single moment abandoned by God's providence. And though she is but feebly nourished yet, this is—*where she hath a place prepared of God, that they shall feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*—This is quite evidently identical with the period of the *two witnesses*.

Verse 7 *And there was war in heaven:*—This war in heaven is the fierce contest in the church between truth and error, between Christ and antichrist, between *Michael and his angels*—that is, Christ and his ministers—and *the dragon and his angels*—that is, Satan and his emissaries. And in this contest *Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,*—This war is not exclusively

8 And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

applicable to any one period in the history of the Christian church, though it may be *peculiarly* applicable to this twelve hundred and sixty years. Michael, the archangel, is most certainly Jesus Christ, the Angel of the covenant.

Verse 8 *And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.*—The great red dragon signally failed in his war of extermination upon the church, though his prospect of success seemed so flattering for such a length of time. And after the Reformation and the establishment of Protestantism, the dragon and his angels found the great theater of their operations outside of the Christian church ; whereas, during this great struggle, it had been in the church. *Neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

Verse 9 *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world:*—If any doubt still remains as to what the *great red dragon* really is, it is removed by the plain, emphatic language of this verse ; and if we have never before been fully satisfied that all this—the *great dragon* that persecuted the woman, *that old serpent* with his many heads, *the devil and his angels, and Satan*, with his emissaries—is anti-christ, error, the opposer of truth, the liar, the father of lies, the deceiver—that question, too, is here for ever settled ; for it is he *which deceiveth the whole world*. And *he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*—So that he, anti-christ, was no longer a domestic enemy ; but that he then became a foreign foe. I am aware that this view excludes Roman Catholicism from the church of God from and

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

after the time of the Reformation. I can only say, Be it so, if the BOOK teaches it.

Verse 10 *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven,—* This loud voice, which is heard in the church, is the voice of truth, for error has been cast out; so that truth now teaches successfully, saying, *Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ:—*The truth of God, in the New Testament, and by the mouth of the greatest of all the great reformers of the age now under review, Martin Luther, taught that salvation was not by purchasing indulgences with money, by penance, by vows of celibacy, or by living the life of a hermit, being a monk or a nun, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So that, instead of the feeble voice of prophecy, or instruction, which had been heard so long during the dark ages, there is now great strength, even the power of Christ. As Peter said to the people, when, at his bidding, the lame man had arisen, leaped, and walked, Look not on us as if, by our own power or holiness, we had made this man to walk; but by the power of Christ, and by faith in his name, hath he this perfect soundness before you this day. And the kingdom of God has come, now; for error, or antichrist, is cast down, and truth is elevated and established on the throne.

Verse 11 *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;—*What is more strikingly appropriate than the application of this language to the

12 Therefore rejoice, *ye heavens*, and *ye that dwell in them*. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the

scenes which were witnessed in the disputations between Luther and the champions of Rome? Luther and his co-laborers manifestly wielded the power of truth; they were opposed with great vehemence, upon the rostrum and by the press; all the powers of elocution and force of rhetoric were brought to bear with great skill; but the power of truth, faith in Jesus Christ, the blood of the Lamb, were invincible. *And by the word of their testimony* they overcame antichrist. And these champions for the truth stood boldly up in the face of danger, and quailed not, even when persecuted unto death.

Verse 12 *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.*—If the harmony of all the parts in the complicated emblematical imagery of the preceding part of this chapter, and its harmony with other parts of the prophecy, may be taken as good evidence that the interpretations are correct, the same harmony requires that heavens, and they that dwell in them, here be applied to Protestantism and Protestants; and the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea are the Roman subjects and the members of the Roman church. And the woe pronounced upon them, because the devil is come down unto them, may be regarded as the premonitory symptom of that corruption which ultimately prepares great Babylon for the destruction delineated in chaps. xvii. xviii. *Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

Verse 13 *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man.*—

earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child*.

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

The dragon and his angels being cast out, and their place being found no more in heaven, does not imply that the church shall suffer no more by them, as is intimated in the notes on verses 8 and 9. But he was the more inclined, and the more excited, to persecute the woman—the church—which brought forth, or developed the man, by revealing to him a just idea and comparatively clear knowledge of God, and of his will concerning man, and of man's duty to him. And certainly, all this applies with peculiar appropriateness, and with great force, to the persecutions against Protestantism and the developments of the Reformation.

Verse 14 *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle*,—The two wings, with which the woman flies into the wilderness, seem to be the spirit of political and religious liberty; and the time and circumstances of this flight seem to be different from that noted in verse 6: there, the wilderness was pagan Rome; here, the wilderness is pagan America; there, the woman and her child, the church and the truth of Christianity, were feebly sustained, while the dragon, the serpent, error, antichrist, were in heaven, *in* the church; here, the woman is nourished *from* the face of the serpent. And though the woman's sojourn in this wilderness is the same in the length of its duration with that in the other, yet it is entirely separate and distinct from it chronologically. This period commenced with the flight of Protestantism into the new world; (not that it left the old world, but that it was established in the new, also;) and, perhaps, will end with the destruction of great Baby-

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

16 And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went

lon, the prophecy concerning which is found in chaps. xvii. xviii.

Verse 15 *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*—This flood of water seems to be the multitudes of Roman Catholic emigrants to America. And the discerning may easily see that these emigrants, and especially their officials, priests, and bishops, and the teachers of schools, hope, by numbers and influence, to swallow up and carry away Protestants and Protestant children, in such numbers as to gain the most complete ascendancy; and so establish the authority and power of the papacy upon a firm basis. And these people in the East, as well as in the West, evidently indulge such hopes, or they would not contribute so liberally to establish influential schools, and to build fine cathedrals in America.

Verse 16 *And the earth helped the woman;—*The very extent of this vast continent, while thinly inhabited, is favorable to independency, to freedom of thought and action; and this is exceedingly unfavorable to popedom. And while they are designed, and are even laboring, to overwhelm the woman, many of the papists become infected with this free spirit. And these waters, so much diluted by being spread over such a vast territory, operate feebly to what they would otherwise do. *And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

Verse 17 *And the dragon was wroth with the woman,*

to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

and went to make war with the remnant of her seed,—The papists may, for some time yet to come, employ the same means which they have long employed to subvert Protestantism; such as attracting the attention of Protestant parents by their fine schools, so as to get the training of their children confided to them; by exciting the admiration of the aristocratic, and even of the vulgar, with their magnificent cathedrals; and by arresting the ear and eye of multitudes, by their fine music and imposing ceremonies. But the day is coming when the dragon will, in all probability—and this verse seems to teach as much—employ these waters in a more hostile manner against the seed of the woman, who cannot be attracted by the means now employed; being sustained, as were the reformers in verse 11, by the testimony of Jesus Christ. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 *A beast riseth out of the sea with seven heads and ten horns, to whom the dragon giveth his power. 11 Another beast cometh up out of the earth: 14 causeth an image of the former beast to be made, 15 and that men should worship it, 10 and receive his mark.*

AND I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten

NOTES.—CHAPTER XIII.

Verse 1 *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a*

horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

beast rise up out of the sea,—The apostle in this vision was brought so near—for he *stood upon the sand of the sea*—as to see quite clearly the object before him. And the beast which he saw rise up out of the sea, represents the corrupt Roman power. And whereas the heads of the dragon represent direct Satanic power, the heads of this beast represent ecclesiastical authority; and whereas the horns of the dragon represent the influence of bad men, the horns of this beast represent the civil power; so that the crowns, or regal power here is upon the horns, whereas the crowns of the dragon were upon his heads. And upon the heads of this beast—the archbishops or popes of Rome—is the *name of blasphemy*—not viceroy merely, nor apostolic vicar only, but vicar of Jesus Christ. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.*

Verse 2 *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard*,—Perhaps there is no beast that better represents activity and strength combined than the leopard; and the foot well represents the strength of the bear, and the mouth that of the lion. And these three animals together well represent the Roman power. And certainly his power for evil, and his authority to command, will be complete when he, with diabolical power, takes his position in the church, where the dragon has his seat, during this part of her history. *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth*

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Verse 3 *And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death;*—Superstition is most undoubtedly a vital head of the beast, of error, of antichrist; and superstition was, as it were, wounded to death by the war which was waged against image-worship in the eighth century. And as this is a point so specially marked in the language of the prophecy, it is important to find it circumstantially and precisely fulfilled in history; so we turn to Gibbon, our favorite historian, who so unconsciously, yet so distinctly, records the fulfillment of prophecy. We will transcribe a section from Chap. XLIX., p. 36, vol. 5, of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, in which we find not only that this head was wounded, but we find also that the deadly wound was healed, and that in this particular—in superstition—as well as in others, all the world—the Roman world—wandered after the beast: “While the popes in Italy enjoyed their freedom and dominion, the images, the first cause of their revolt, were restored in the Eastern empire. Under the reign of Constantine V., the union of civil and ecclesiastical power had overthrown the tree without extirpating the root of superstition. The idols (for such they were now held) were secretly cherished by the order and the sex most prone to devotion, and the fond alliance of the monks and females obtained a final victory over the reason and authority of man. Leo IV. maintained with less rigor the religion of his father and grandfather, but his wife, the fair and ambitious Irene, had imbibed the zeal of the Athenians, the heirs of the idolatry, rather than the philosophy of their

ancestors. During the life of her husband these sentiments were inflamed by danger and dissimulation, and she could only labor to protect and promote some favorite monks, whom she drew from their caverns and seated on the metropolitan thrones of the East. But as soon as she reigned in her own name and that of her son, Irene more seriously undertook the ruin of the Iconoclasts, and the first step of her future persecution was a general edict for liberty of conscience. In the restoration of the monks a thousand images were exposed to the public veneration; a thousand legends were invented of their sufferings and miracles. By the opportunities of death or removal, the episcopal seats were judiciously filled; the most eager competitors for earthly or celestial favor anticipated and flattered the judgment of their sovereign, and the promotion of her secretary Tarasius gave Irene the patriarch of Constantinople, and the command of the oriental church. But the decrees of a general council could only be repealed by a similar assembly; the Iconoclasts whom she convened were bold in possession and averse to debate, and the feeble voice of the bishops was reëchoed by the more formidable clamor of the soldiers and people of Constantinople. The delay and intrigues of a year, the separation of the disaffected troops, and the choice of Nice for a second orthodox synod, removed these obstacles, and the episcopal conscience was again, after the Greek fashion, in the hands of the prince. No more than eighteen days were allowed for the consummation of this important work; the Iconoclasts appeared, not as judges, but as criminals or penitents; the scene was decorated by the legates of Pope Adrian and the Eastern patriarch, the decrees were framed by the president Tarasius, and ratified by the acclamations and subscriptions of three hundred and fifty bishops. They unanimously pronounced that the worship of images is agreeable to Scripture and

reason, to the fathers and councils of the church; but they hesitate whether that worship be relative or direct; whether the Godhead and the figure of Christ be entitled to the same mode of adoration. Of this second Nicene council the acts are still extant, a curious monument of superstition and ignorance, of falsehood and folly. I shall only notice the judgment of the bishops on the comparative merit of image-worship and morality. A monk had concluded a truce with the dæmon of fornication, on condition of interrupting his daily prayers to a picture that hung in his cell. His scruples prompted him to consult the abbot:—‘Rather then abstain from adoring Christ and his mother in their holy images, it would be better for you,’ replied the casuist, ‘to enter every brothel, and visit every prostitute in the city.’ For the honor of orthodoxy, at least the orthodoxy of the Roman church, it is somewhat unfortunate that the two princes who convened the two councils of Nice are both stained with the blood of their sons. The second of these assemblies was approved and rigorously executed by the despotism of Irene; and she refused her adversaries the toleration which at first she had granted to her friends. During the five succeeding reigns, a period of thirty-eight years, the contest was maintained with unabated rage and various success between the worshipers and the breakers of the images; but I am not inclined to pursue with minute diligence the repetition of the same events. Nicephorus allowed a general liberty of speech and practice; and the only virtue of his reign is accused by the monks as the cause of his temporal and eternal perdition. Superstition and weakness formed the character of Michael I.; but the saints and images were incapable of supporting their votary on the throne. In the purple, Leo V. asserted the name and religion of an Armenian; and the idols, with their seditious adherents, were condemned to a second exile.

Their applause would have sanctified the murder of an impious tyrant, but his assassin and successor, Michael II., was tainted from his birth with the Phrygian heresies: he attempted to mediate between the contending parties, and the intractable spirit of the Catholics insensibly cast him into the opposite scale. His moderation was guarded by timidity; but his son Theophilus, alike ignorant of fear and pity, was the last and most cruel of the Iconoclasts. The enthusiasm of the times ran strongly against them; and the emperors who stemmed the torrent were exasperated and punished by the public hatred. After the death of Theophilus, the final victory of the images was achieved by a second female, his widow, Theodora, whom he left the guardian of the empire. Her measures were bold and decisive. The fiction of a tardy repentance absolved the fame and the soul of her deceased husband; the sentence of the Iconoclast patriarch was commuted from the loss of his eyes to a whipping of two hundred lashes; the bishops trembled, the monks shouted, and the festival of orthodoxy preserves the annual memory of the triumph of the images. A single question yet remained, whether they are endowed with any proper and inherent sanctity; it was agitated by the Greeks of the eleventh century; and as this opinion has the strongest recommendation of absurdity, I am surprised that it was not more explicitly decided in the affirmative. In the West, Pope Adrian I. accepted and announced the decrees of the Nicene assembly, which is now revered by the Catholics as the seventh in rank of the general councils. Rome and Italy were docile to the voice of their father; but the greatest part of the Latin Christians were far behind in the race of superstition. The churches of France, Germany, England, and Spain, steered a middle course between the adoration and the destruction of images, which they admitted into their temples, not as objects of worship, but as lively and

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great

useful memorials of faith and history. An angry book of controversy was composed and published in the name of Charlemagne; under his authority a synod of three hundred bishops was assembled at Frankfort; they blamed the fury of the Iconoclasts, but they pronounced a more severe censure against the superstition of the Greeks, and the decrees of their pretended council, which was long despised by the barbarians of the West. Among them the worship of images advanced with silent and insensible progress; but a large atonement is made for their hesitation and delay by the gross idolatry of the ages which precede the Reformation, and of the countries, both in Europe and America, which are still immersed in the gloom of superstition." After quoting this brief section from history, we cannot forbear inserting the text again. *And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.*

Verse 4 *And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast,*—The dragon, in giving his power unto the beast, did not relinquish that power; but was as well able to exercise it after having delegated it as before. And, as the dragon, which gave power unto the beast, and he which received it, were worshiped simultaneously, this beast, which rose up out of the sea, reigned during the dark ages, while the dragon was still in the church, before he was cast out into the earth. And, as this was a period of great power with the beast, the emphatic inquiry was, *Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

Verse 5 *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking*

things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

great things and blasphemies ;—This mouth speaking great things, and the disposition to blaspheme, together with incitement to indulge it, were items in the endowment from the dragon. So that he not only had the name of blasphemy on his heads, but he also practiced the same, by claiming to exercise, in his person and office, the proper authority and power of Christ over his church on earth, the quintessence of antichristian usurpation. And this diabolical and dangerous power, against the influence of truth and righteousness, continued in the church during the long and dreary period of the dark ages, twelve hundred and sixty years; until he, with his emissaries, with the dragon and his angels, were cast out. *And power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

Verse 6 *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*—This monstrous beast, the great Roman power, by his mouthpiece, the Pope of Rome, which St. Paul calls, That man of sin, who should afterward be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. And thus did this wonderful beast *open his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name,* by assuming to be the vicar of Jesus Christ, *and his tabernacle,* by setting himself, in the church of God, in God's stead; and so would, if he could, exclude God, and the true worship, from the church and from the world, wherein God disdains not to manifest his gracious presence by the work-

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

ing of his mighty power, any more than by the Shekinah in his temple, wherein he dwelt, as he sojourned in the tabernacle previously; and against those true believers, and true worshipers, who rightfully and righteously dwell in the church.

Verse 7 *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:*—During the period of its continuance, this war is identical with the war between Michael and his angels and the dragon and his angels. The fact stated here, that the beast overcame the saints, and made martyrs of multitudes of them, does not contradict the statement there, that *the dragon and his angels prevailed not*; for error and unrighteousness are not destined ultimately to prevail against truth and righteousness. Antichrist shall not prevail against Christ; though for a time, and for a considerable length of time, he exercised tyrannical and cruel power over the Roman empire and all its provinces, together with the pagan world, if we understand antichrist to comprehend all that is opposed to Christ—all error, whether it is propagated in the name of Christ or not. *And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

Verse 8 *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*—It does seem that comment is unnecessary on this verse, farther than to state, that it certainly applies to the dark ages, wherein all men, everywhere, worshiped antichrist, except

9 If any man have an ear let him hear.

10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

the few true believers and faithful adherents to Christ, who worshiped the Lamb that was slain at the peril of their own lives.

Verse 9 *If any man have an ear, let him hear.*—Let these important announcements deeply impress and serve as a solemn warning to all who would escape the danger; and let them secure their eternal interests by adhering firmly to the truth, and being faithful to Christ, though they accomplish it by securing for themselves martyrs' crowns.

Verse 10 *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity:*—In this long and fierce contest between truth and error, between Christ and antichrist, carnal weapons are not the proper instrumentalities to be employed. Whoever, by physical force, leads his foe into captivity, may expect, in his turn, by the fortunes of war, to go into captivity. And, as a carnal weapon provokes resistance, so *he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.*—But only the few, who, by faith and patience, during all this long, dark period, wait for the coming of their Lord, keep aloof from this hostile strife. *Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*—We cannot forbear making an extract in this place from the history of these times. William Jones, an English church historian, takes this from John Paul Perrin, the historian of the Waldenses; in whose history there is a treatise, by an unknown author, concerning Antichrist, Purgatory, the Invocation of Saints, and the Sacraments, bearing date eleven hundred and twenty, which is nearly half a century before the time of Peter Waldo:—“Antichrist is a falsehood, or deceit, varnished over with the semblance of truth, and of the righteousness of Christ

and his spouse, yet in opposition to the way of truth, righteousness, faith, hope, charity, as well as to moral life. It is not any particular person ordained to any degree of office, or ministry, but it is a system of falsehood, opposing itself to the truth, covering and adorning itself with a show of beauty and piety, yet very unsuitable to the church of Christ, as by the names, and offices, the Scriptures, and the sacraments, and various other things, may appear. The system of iniquity thus completed with its ministers, great and small, supported by those who are induced to follow it with an evil heart, and blindfold—this is the congregation, which, taken together, comprises what is called antichrist, or Babylon, the great whore, the man of sin, the son of perdition. . . . He is termed antichrist, because being disguised under the names of Christ, and of his church, and faithful members, he oppugns the salvation which Christ wrought out, and which is truly administered in his church, and of which salvation believers participate by faith, hope, and charity. Thus he opposes the truth by the wisdom of this world, by false religion, by counterfeit holiness, by ecclesiastical power, by secular tyranny, and by the riches, honors, dignities, with the pleasures and delicacies of this world. It should therefore be carefully observed, that antichrist could not come without a concurrence of all these things, making up a system of hypocrisy and falsehood—these must be the wise of this world, the religious orders, the Pharisees, ministers, and doctors, the secular power, with the people of the world, all mingled together. For, although antichrist was conceived in the times of the apostles, he was then in his infancy, imperfect and unformed, rude, unshapen, and wanting utterance. He then wanted those hypocritical ministers and human ordinances, and the outward show of religious orders, which he afterward obtained. As he was destitute of riches and other endow-

ments necessary to allure to himself ministers for his service, and to enable him to multiply, defend, and protect his adherents, so he also wanted the secular power to force others to forsake the truth and embrace falsehood. But, growing up in his members, that is, in his blind and dissembling ministers, and in worldly subjects, he at length arrived at full maturity, when men, whose hearts were set upon this world, blind in the faith, multiplied in the church, and by the union of church and state, got the power of both into their hands. Christ never had an enemy like this; so able to pervert the way of truth into falsehood, insomuch that the true church, with her children, is trodden under foot. The worship that belongs alone to God he transfers to antichrist himself—to the creature, male and female, deceased—to images, carcasses, and relics. The sacrament of the Eucharist is converted into an object of adoration, and the worshiping of God alone is prohibited. He robs the Saviour of his merits, and the sufficiency of his grace in justification, regeneration, remission of sins, sanctification, establishment in the faith, and spiritual nourishment; ascribing all these things to his own authority, to a form of words, to his own works, to the intercession of saints, and to the fire of purgatory. He seduces the people from Christ, drawing off their minds from seeking those blessings in him, by a lively faith in God, in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, and teaching his followers to expect them by the will and pleasure and works of antichrist. He teaches to baptize children into the faith, and attributes to this the work of regeneration; thus confounding the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration with the external rite of baptism; and on this foundation bestows orders, and indeed grounds all his Christianity. He places all religion and holiness in going to mass, and has mingled together all description of ceremonies, Jewish, Heathen, and Christian; and by means

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

thereof, the people are deprived of spiritual food, seduced from the true religion and the commandments of God, and established in vain and presumptuous hopes. All his works are done to be seen of men, that he may glut himself with unsatiable avarice; and hence every thing is set to sale. He allows of open sins, without ecclesiastical censure, and even the impenitent are not excommunicated. He does not govern, nor does he maintain his unity, by the Holy Spirit, but by means of the secular power, making use of the same to effect spiritual matters. He hates, and persecutes, and searches after, and plunders, and destroys the members of Christ. These are some of the principal of the works of antichrist against the truth, but the whole are past numbering or recording."

Verse 11 *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth*;—The popes, bishops, and cardinals of Rome had long set up high claims, and made large pretensions to rule and govern, religiously and politically; but, as early as the close of the eighth century, a formidable power was seen coming up; but this is not that of the pope of Rome, nor of the cardinals, who elected that officer of the church, neither is it that of the bishops, though they, even by Scripture authority, might govern the church; but it is a great secular power, coming up, even from beyond the precincts of Italy, wielding the empire and church of Rome. This seems to be that other beast which the apostolic prophet *beheld coming up out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb*; possessing, as the officers of the church had done, the functions of religious and political dominion. And this beast exercised the same imperial authority, and evinced the same

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

fanatical zeal, as *the beast before him*, which received the power and occupied the seat of the dragon, and exercised great authority. *And he spake as a dragon.*

Verse 12 *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him*,—Though this beast was jealous of the great power which he possessed, yet he was so much opposed to any change of the religion of the Romans, that he would have the whole empire, with all its provinces and subjects, *worship the first beast*; for he does not seem at all inclined towards the worship of the true God. *And he causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*—The first demonstrations of the power of this beast were in the reign of Charlemagne, the first Roman emperor of the House of France; but it continued centuries afterward, under the French and German emperors. To be convinced of the correctness of the view here taken of this beast, it does seem to me that we have only to consult the history of these times. We make a few extracts from the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Edward Gibbon, Chap. XLIX., commencing on p. 52, vol. 5: “Two-thirds of the western empire of Rome were subject to Charlemagne, and the deficiency was amply supplied by his command of the inaccessible or invincible nations of Germany. But in the choice of his enemies, we may be reasonably surprised that he so often preferred the poverty of the north to the riches of the south. The three-and-thirty campaigns laboriously consumed in the woods and morasses of Germany would have sufficed to assert the amplitude of his title by the expulsion of the Greeks from Italy, and the Saracens from Spain. The

weakness of the Greeks would have insured an easy victory ; and the holy crusade against the Saracens would have been prompted by glory and revenge, and loudly justified by religion and policy. Perhaps, in his expeditions beyond the Rhine and the Elbe, he aspired to save his monarchy from the fate of the Roman empire, to disarm the enemies of civilized society, and to eradicate the seed of future emigrations. But it has been wisely observed that, in a light of precaution, all conquest must be ineffectual unless it could be universal, since the increasing circle must be involved in a larger sphere of hostility. The subjugation of Germany withdrew the veil which had so long concealed the continent or islands of Scandinavia from the knowledge of Europe, and awakened the torpid courage of their barbarous natives. The fiercest of the Saxon idolaters escaped from the Christian tyrant to their brethren of the north ; the ocean and Mediterranean were covered with their piratical fleets ; and Charlemagne beheld with a sigh the destructive progress of the Normans who, in less than seventy years, precipitated the fall of his race and monarchy. Had the pope and the Romans revived the primitive constitution, the titles of emperor and Augustus were conferred on Charlemagne for the term of his life ; and his successors, on each vacancy, must have ascended the throne by a formal or tacit election. But the association of his son Lewis the Pious asserts the independent right of monarchy and conquest ; and the emperor seems on this occasion to have foreseen and prevented the latent claims of the clergy. The royal youth was commanded to take the crown from the altar, and with his own hands to place it on his head, as a gift which he held from God, his father, and the nation. The same ceremony was repeated, though with less energy, in the subsequent associations of Lothaire and Lewis II. ; the Carlovingian scepter was transmitted from father to

son, in a lineal descent of four generations; and the ambition of the popes was reduced to the empty honor of crowning and anointing these hereditary princes, who were already invested with their power and dominions. The pious Lewis survived his brothers, and embraced the whole empire of Charlemagne; but the nations and the nobles, his bishops, and his children, quickly discerned that this mighty mass was no longer inspired by the same soul; and the foundations were undermined to the center, while the external surface was yet fair and entire. After a war, or battle, which consumed one hundred thousand Franks, the empire was divided by treaty between his three sons, who had violated every filial and fraternal duty. The kingdoms of Germany and France were for ever separated; the provinces of Gaul, between the Rhone and the Alps, the Meuse and the Rhine, were assigned, with Italy, to the imperial dignity of Lothaire. In the partition of his share, Lorraine and Arles, two recent and transitory kingdoms, were bestowed on the younger children; and Lewis II., his eldest son, was content with the realm of Italy, the proper and sufficient patrimony of a Roman emperor. On his death, without any male issue, the vacant throne was disputed by his uncles and cousins; and the popes most dexterously seized the occasion of judging the claims and merits of the candidates, and of bestowing on the most obsequious, or most liberal, the imperial office of Advocate of the Roman church. The dregs of the Carlovingian race no longer exhibited any symptoms of virtue or power, and the ridiculous epithets of the *bald*, the *stammerer*, the *fat*, and the *simple*, distinguished the tame and uniform features of a crowd of kings alike deserving of oblivion. By the failure of the collateral branches, the whole inheritance devolved on Charles the Fat, the last emperor of his family; his insanity authorized the desertion of Germany, Italy, and

France ; he was deposed in a diet, and solicited his daily bread from the rebels, by whose contempt his life and liberty had been spared. According to the measure of their force, the governors, the bishops, and the lords, usurped the fragments of the falling empire ; and some preference was shown to the female, or illegitimate blood of Charlemagne. Of the greater part, the title and the possession were alike doubtful, and the merit was adequate to the contracted scale of their dominions. Those who could appear with an army at the gates of Rome were crowned emperors in the Vatican ; but their modesty was more frequently satisfied with the appellation of kings of Italy ; and the whole term of seventy-four years may be deemed a vacancy, from the abdication of Charles the Fat to the establishment of Otho I. Otho was of the noble race of the dukes of Saxony ; and if he truly descended from Witikind, the adversary and proselyte of Charlemagne, the posterity of a vanquished people was exalted to reign over their conquerors. His father, Henry the Fowler, was elected by the suffrage of the nation, to save and institute the kingdom of Germany. Its limits were enlarged on every side by his son, the first and greatest of the Othos. A portion of Gaul, to the west of the Rhine, along the banks of the Meuse and the Moselle, was assigned to the Germans, by whose blood and language it has been tinged since the time of Cæsar and Tacitus. Between the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Alps, the successors of Otho acquired a vain supremacy over the broken kingdoms of Burgundy and Arles. In the north, Christianity was propagated by the sword of Otho, the conqueror and apostle of the Slavic nations of the Elbe and Oder ; the marches of Brandenburg and Sleswick were fortified with German colonies ; and the king of Denmark, the dukes of Poland and Bohemia, confessed themselves his tributary vassals. At the head of a victorious army he passed the Alps, sub-

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

duced the kingdom of Italy, delivered the Pope, and for ever fixed the imperial crown in the name and nation of Germany. From that memorable era two maxims of public jurisprudence were introduced by force and ratified by time: 1. *That* the prince, who was elected in the German diet, acquired, from that instant, the subject kingdoms of Italy and Rome. 2. But that he might not legally assume the titles of emperor and Augustus, till he had received the crown from the hands of the Roman pontiff."

Verse 13 *And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men*,—If we but read with attention and discernment the history of these times, we shall see that the French and German princes not only aspire to imperial dignity, but they also claim, as a prerogative, the power and authority of filling all the ecclesiastical seats of Rome, even the chair of St. Peter. And this beast proceeds with the greater confidence and firmness in the exercise of this power, in the doing of these great wonders in the sight of men, because he is establishing and continuing, in his own original dominions of France and Germany, or on the earth, the same form of worship established by the beast that rose up out of the sea. *And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.*

Verse 14 *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the the beast*;—This prerogative, so unhesitatingly exercised by

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

the supreme ruler, was certainly well calculated to influence his subjects, and especially his countrymen, in their religion, and in the form of their worship; hence he finds no difficulty, as it accords with the passions, prejudices, and superstitions of men, in establishing, by authority, in France, and even in Germany, the Roman Catholic religion, an exact image, a perfect *fac simile* of the original. And he even adds the influence of policy to fanatical superstition in favor of this great Roman power, politically and religiously, which though *wounded* by the almost irresistible *sword* of the Saracens and northern barbarians, was not slain, but *did live*. And so we hear this beast *saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live*.

Verse 15 *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast*,—This image, so far from being a lifeless representation of the original beast, is a living, moving, active thing, endowed with the important functions of a voice to command, and the secular arm to enforce obedience, even by punishing capitally all offenders, *that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed*.

Verse 16 *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads*:—This distinguishing mark of the beast is an unqualified assent and conformity to the faith and practice of the church of Rome; and this unbounded re-

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

quirement includes all orders of men in the church and in the empire, from the imperial throne and the chair of St. Peter to the hovel of the meanest slave, in the most distant and inconsiderable province of the empire.

Verse 17 *And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*—None of the privileges of a citizen, or a subject, might be enjoyed by a heretic or a pagan. And all were esteemed heretics who were not perfectly obsequious to the opinions and requirements of the church, as expressed by her head, the pope of Rome. The historian, after having described the poverty of Charles IV., one of the German emperors of Rome, takes a view of the same prince, in the diets of the empire, which we extract as appropriate in this place, and as illustrative of, and corroborating, the view here taken of the image of the beast. It is from Gibbon's Rome, p. 72, vol. v.: "From this humiliating scene, let us turn to the apparent majesty of the same Charles in the diets of the empire. The golden bull, which fixes the Germanic constitution, is promulgated in the style of a sovereign and legislator. A hundred princes bowed before his throne, and exalted their own dignity by the voluntary honors which they yielded to their chief or minister. At the royal banquet, the hereditary great officers, the seven electors, who in rank and title were equal to kings, performed the solemn and domestic service of the palace. The seals of the triple kingdom were borne in state by the archbishops of Mentz, Cologne, and Treves, the perpetual archchancellors of Germany, Italy, and Arles. The great marshal, on horseback, exercised his function with a silver

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore *and* six.

measure of oats, which he emptied on the ground, and immediately dismounted to regulate the order of the guests. The great steward, the count palatine of the Rhine, placed the dishes on the table. The great chamberlain, the margrave of Brandenburg, presented, after the repast, the golden ewer and basin, to wash. The king of Bohemia, as great cup-bearer, was represented by the emperor's brother, the duke of Luxemburgh and Brabant; and the procession was closed by the great huntsmen, who introduced a boar and a stag, with a loud chorus of horns and hounds. Nor was the supremacy of the emperor confined to Germany alone; the hereditary monarchs of Europe confessed the preëminence of his rank and dignity; he was the first of the Christian princes, the temporal head of the great republic of the West; to his person the title of majesty was long appropriated, and he disputed with the pope the sublime prerogative of creating kings and assembling councils. The oracle of the civil law, the learned Bartolus, was a pensioner of Charles IV., and his school resounded with the doctrine that the Roman emperor was the rightful sovereign of the earth, from the rising to the setting sun. The contrary opinion was condemned, not as an error, but as a heresy, since even the gospel had pronounced—'And there went forth a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that *all the world* should be taxed.'"

Verse 18 *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast:*—The *beast* that rose up out of the sea, and the *other beast* which was seen coming up out of the earth, were in some respects diverse, the one from the other, but they have again become a unit—

they are here identical—now *it is the beast*. We take the interpretation of the number of the beast from Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, London edition, reprinted in Philadelphia, p 548: “Mention having been made of *the number of the beast, or the number of his name*, (for they are both the same,) the prophet proceeds to inform us what that number is, leaving us from the number to collect the name, (v. 18,) ‘Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast.’ It is not therefore a vain and ridiculous attempt to search into this mystery; but on the contrary, is recommended to us upon the authority of an apostle. ‘For it is the number of a man’—it is a method of numbering practiced among men; as ‘the measure of a man,’ (xxi. 17,) is such a measure as men commonly make use of in measuring. It was a method practiced among the ancients to denote names by numbers; as the name of *Thouth*, or the Egyptian Mercury, was signified by the number 1218; the name of Jupiter, as ‘H’Αρχή, or *The beginning of things*, by the number 737; and the name of the sun, as ἡὺς, *good*, or ὕης, *the author of rain*, by the number 608. St. Barnabas, the companion of St. Paul, in his Epistle, discovers, in like manner, the name of Jesus crucified in the number 318; and other instances might be produced, if there was occasion. It hath been the usual method in all God’s dispensations, for the Holy Spirit to accommodate his expressions to the customs, fashions, and manners of the several ages. Since, then, this art and mystery of numbers was so much used among the ancients, it is less wonderful that the beast also should have his number, ‘and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.’ Here only the number is specified; and from the number we must, as well as we can, collect the name. Several names, possibly, might be cited, which contain this number; but it is evident that it must be some Greek or Hebrew name; and with the

name also the other qualities and properties of the beast must all agree. The name alone will not constitute an agreement; all other particulars must be perfectly applicable, and the name also must comprehend the precise number of 666. No name appears more proper and suitable than that famous one mentioned by Irenæus, who lived not long after St. John's time, and was the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of John. He saith, that 'the name *Lateinos* contains the number of 666; and it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called, for they are Latins who now reign; but in this we will not glory;' that is, as it becomes a modest and pious man in a point of such difficulty, he will not be too confident of his explication. *Lateinos* with *ei* is the true orthography, as the Greeks wrote the long *i* of the Latins, and as the Latins themselves wrote in former times; no objection, therefore, can be drawn from the spelling of the name, and the thing agrees to admiration. For after the division of the empire, the Greeks and other orientals called the people of the Western church, or church of Rome, *Latins*; and as Dr. Henry Moore expresseth it, they *latinize* in every thing. Mass, prayers, hymns, litanies, canons, decretals, bulls, are conceived in Latin. The papal councils speak Latin. Women themselves pray in Latin. Nor is the Scripture read in any other language under popery, than Latin. Wherefore the Council of Trent commanded the vulgar Latin to be the only authentic version. Nor do their doctors doubt to prefer it to the Hebrew and Greek text itself, which was written by the prophets and apostles. In short, all things are Latin; the pope having communicated his language to the people under his dominion, as the mark and character of his empire. They themselves, indeed, choose rather to be called *Romans*, and more absurdly still, *Roman Catholics*; and probably the apostle, as he hath made use of some Hebrew names in this book,

as *Abaddon*, (ix. 11,) and *Armageddon*, (xvi. 16,) so might in this place likewise allude to the name in the Hebrew language. Now, *Romiith* is the Hebrew name for the *Roman beast* or *Roman kingdom*; and this word, as well as the former word *Lateinos*, contains the just and exact number of 666. It is really surprising that there should be such a fatal coincidence in both names, in both languages. Mr. Pyle asserts, and I believe he may assert very truly, that 'no other word, in any language whatever, can be found to express both the same *number* and the same *thing*.'"

The numerical value of the Greek characters composing the name *Lateinos* is, respectively:

Λ=	30
Α=	1
Τ=	300
Ε=	5
Ι=	10
Ν=	50
Ο=	70
Σ=	200
	666

The numerical value of the Hebrew characters composing the name *Romiith* is, respectively:

ר=	200
י=	6
מ=	40
י=	10
י=	10
ו=	400
	666

CHAPTER XIV.

- 1 *The Lamb standing on mount Sion with his company.*
 6 *An angel preacheth the gospel.* 8 *The fall of Babylon.* 15 *The harvest of the world, and putting in of the sickle.* 20 *The vintage and winepress of the wrath of God.*

AND I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XIV.

Verse 1 *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion*,—This scene is really a very pleasing one, after hav-

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

ing looked so long on such a dark picture. The Lamb on mount Sion is Jesus Christ, dwelling in, recognizing, and blessing his church, which now and henceforth is Protestant; as the Reformation has sufficiently developed it, to stand up, and in the name of Christ, and by the power of truth—the power and grace of God—to oppose the beast, and the great red dragon—antichrist—which has been cast out of the church. But the war still goes on between truth and error. This hundred forty and four thousand represents all those who have the truth of God in their minds, and the image of Christ impressed upon their hearts: For there is *with the Lamb, on the mount Sion, a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

Verse 2 *And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder:*—Long had the voice of instruction been indistinct and unsatisfactory, and the voice of warning feeble, and the number of truthful teachers were few; but now, the voice is *as the voice of many waters*—from multitudes of people; and, *as of a great thunder*—loud, distinctly heard, and solemn. And there was also the voice of joy; for the apostolic prophet says, *And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps.*

Verse 3 *And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders;*—These sung a new song before the throne, in the presence of Him who

4 These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

sat upon it, and in the presence of all the redeemed of all ages, together with their spiritual guides, their teachers in divine things ; and it was doubtless understood by all these, and the chorus of it may have been swelled by the heavenly throng, but no man in the Christian age, that is, no one with Christian privileges can learn this song but the initiated, the taught, the sealed of God, those who have the Father's name written in their foreheads, those who know God by the revelation of his Son Jesus Christ. *No man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

Verse 4 *These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins.*—This is a beautifully sublime figure to represent the chaste loveliness of those who have been made pure by the blood of the Lamb, by faith in his name and in the virtue of his sacrifice. And with the knowledge and love of Christ, thus obtained, with this joy in the Holy Ghost, they adhere to and follow him under any and all circumstances. *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*—Whether with the church, patronized by government, which makes it popular, and safe, and easy, or with those who protest against the errors and corruptions of the established religion, and so subject themselves to persecution, to suffering, to death. During the reign of the beast, while antichrist was in the church, to adhere to Christ, to follow the Lamb, was dangerous ; consequently the number of devout Christians was small. And even after the Reformation was fairly and fully commenced the danger was not much less, nor was the number of the faith-

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

ful very considerable, consequently these were a prelibation, the firstfruits, a sweet-smelling savor, presented unto God and the Lamb before the plentiful harvest. *These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

Verse 5 *And in their mouth was found no guile:*—It is not marvelous that, in these times of peril, none should attach themselves to the little band of the faithful, except those who had obtained from Christ power and grace to keep their tongues from speaking guile, and so were able to control the whole body. And it is truly refreshing to the Christian heart to hear the sweet and gentle words of the faithful, when upon false accusations, they were put upon trial for their lives and interrogated relative to their faith in God, and to listen to the martyrs at the stake, on the scaffold, on the rack, everywhere, breathing prayers for their murderers and praises to God. But notwithstanding all this, we are not to suppose that these were entirely free from any error in judgment or in doctrine, which might lead to error in practice. Many such errors may be regarded as incident to the times. But they were honest and faithful; and not being responsible for what they could not avoid, *they are without fault before the throne of God.*

Verse 6 *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,*—This angel, if we understand the text, is the missionary spirit, which in times of religious interest has always manifested itself, to some extent, but which has been

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

more fully developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, under and after the labors of John Wesley and his coadjutors. The most prominent feature of this spirit is itinerancy, to dispense the word of life orally, and by distributing the Bible. Hence, the mission and functions of this angel comprehend the institution and operations of Missionary societies, Bible societies, Tract societies, and Colportage. Now, contemplate all these carried out to their full extent, and then read the text: *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.*

Verse 7 *Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come:*—The voice of instruction and warning by all these agencies combined, and properly and faithfully employed, is powerful, it is loud and strong, and the command is reasonable and important, *saying, Fear God*, and fear no other god; *and give glory to him*, and to him only; worship no idol. Let all men, and especially all pagans, know that there is but one God, and that the time has come when they must worship no other, as the knowledge of God is now revealed. Many ages, centuries, and thousands of years, have in the providence of God been employed in developing the intellectual and moral powers of man to receive the knowledge of himself, which he has at length fully revealed by Jesus Christ, and after its revealment in the development of Christianity itself in the minds and hearts of men, so that Christian men now so clearly understand their duties and obligations to God and their neighbors, they see and feel that this knowl-

8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

edge, this great salvation, is not provided for them alone, but for all men, and that they cannot withhold it from those among them who do not understand and enjoy it; nor from the pagan world, without incurring the Divine displeasure. And if it is their duty to impart it, it is the duty of all to whom it comes to embrace it. For if judgment first begin at the house of God, what shall the end be of them that know not God and obey not the gospel? Hence they go, and as they go they preach, *saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

Verse 8 *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city,*—After the Lamb was seen standing on the mount Sion, attended by his company of true believers, and after the missionary spirit had largely developed the operations of the gospel ministry, the Spirit of truth announces that, *Babylon, that great city*, the Roman church *is*, and has long been *fallen, fallen*; deeply and fatally corrupted and corrupting; having become idolatrous herself, she has made or confirmed idolaters, not by scores and hundreds merely, but by nations, and so has brought upon them the *wrath* of which she herself is worthy, and which shall be poured upon her without mixture, from the cup of God's indignation. For the pagan nations there are palliating circumstances, diluting, as it were, their cup of wrath against idolatry; whereas for Rome there is none. *And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever

Verse 9 *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice,*—This third angel seems to be the messenger of retributive justice, proclaiming with the powerful voice of authority, against the beast and his image, which name is employed indifferently, or interchangeably, with Babylon in the preceding verse: *If any man*—that is, any one in Christendom—*worship the beast*, or *receive his mark in his forehead*—believe his dogmas—or *in his hand*—submit to his authority as being divine, as he pretends, the same shall be punished, as in the following verse: *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,*

Verse 10 *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation;*—As stated in the note on verse 8, the idolatry of the Romans was not mitigated by any alleviating circumstance; but greatly aggravated by their bad example, and the employment of coercive means to drive others into the same sin; so that we should not be surprised at the severity of the punishment threatened in these denunciations. Having had the truth revealed to them, they were guilty of sinning against light and knowledge; and their punishment shall be *in the presence of the holy angels, and of the atoning Lamb.*

Verse 11 *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for*

and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

ever and ever:—So far from being purged, cleansed, purified, refined, and saved, by purgatorial fires, as the papists pretend, their punishment shall be eternal, and without intermission, for they shall *have no rest day nor night*. This shall be the doom of all *who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name*.

Verse 12 *Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*.—To continue firm and to be faithful, in such times as those, during the reign of the beast, notwithstanding all the corruptions and corrupting influences; in the face of danger and exposed to death, by the violence of persecution, is a clear and powerful demonstration of the *faith and patience of the saints*. . . *they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*.

Verse 13 *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth*:—This voice from the church of God—the Protestant church—by whatever instrumentality made audible, is the cheering voice of encouragement to all the pious and faithful who live devoted to the cause of truth, and die in the Lord, now and henceforth. And let none of them fear, that, when their pious labors end with their useful lives, their works shall cease; for the Spirit speaketh expressly, that though they rest, their works shall live and go on.

14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Verse 14 *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man,*—After the fall of the Roman power, and the infusion of the missionary spirit into the church—the effect of which was, a purified crowd of true believers were associated together for religious enterprise, and the power and grace of God rested upon them through the Son of his love—St. John beheld this sanctified throng, *a white cloud*, upon which Jesus Christ their Saviour is seated, and already he wears the victor's crown; for *on his head*, as stars, are seen *those who were redeemed from among men, the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb.* *And in his hand a sharp sickle*—the word of Divine truth. *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.*

Verse 15 *And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud,*—This angel, which glowed warmly in the hearts of true believers, who are *the temple* of the living God, and *cried with a loud voice* to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe, seems to be the spirit of interceding prayer, *crying fervently to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap;*

16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

for the harvest of the earth is ripe. In many pagan nations, multitudes who devoutly worship the gods of their fathers, have become sufficiently cultivated and enlightened to desire a better system of religion, who, if the true religion were brought and properly presented to them, would gladly accept it.

Verse 16 *And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.*—This has been partially, though only very partially, accomplished as yet; but will as certainly be done as that God hath spoken it. For the Stone that was cut out of the mountain is destined to fill the whole earth.

Verse 17 *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*—This angel, the spirit of interceding prayer, is the same, and proceeds from the same source, as that in verse 15; and he cries to the same reaper, who uses the same sickle in reaping *the earth*, and in *gathering the clusters of the vine of the earth*; for home missions and foreign missions are supported by the same spirit, and carried on by the same divine energy and power; with only one point of difference, which seems to be indicated in the next verse, by the *angel coming out from the altar, with power over fire.*

Verse 18 *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire;*—This angel is the Holy Spirit,

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

the same who, in chap. viii. 3, *came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and who, in verse 5, took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth. And as the Spirit is the intercessor here with the Saviour, to gather the clusters of the vine of the earth*, it seems that nominal, unbelieving Christians, are harder to bring into the fold of Christ than pagans. But the *vine* here may include all not pagan, not gathered when the earth was reaped; that is, all nominal Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans; and *clusters* may represent these several communities. *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.*

Verse 19 *And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth*,—This great, almighty, divine, and infinitely merciful Messenger to man, *thrust in his sickle*, the sacred word of his divine truth, *into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth*, which, since the divine Messenger reaped the earth, gathering the ripe wheat into his garner, and bringing all paganism within the precincts of Christendom, so that all men, everywhere, who are not Christians spiritually and in truth, are Christians nominally, so that *this vine of the earth* is, without a limiting word, THE VINE OF THE EARTH. And now, all nations, and all men, being put upon the same footing, are brought to the same standard, judged by the same law; consequently, they together are all *cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God.*

20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Verse 20 *And the winepress was trodden without the city*,—The blood of the grape is, by Christ himself, made an emblem of the blood of atonement. And, as the blood of the guilty could not make atonement, and as all men were guilty before God, so *Jesus Christ trod the winepress alone*; for, *of the people there was none to help*. And, as the knowledge of the great atonement has become generally, universally spread abroad, its application in the same way, by faith, becomes general, universal, among all nations. And, as the Roman empire here figuratively represents the whole world, *The winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles*. As, in military enterprises, the infantry of an army is the most reliable arm of its power, so, the cavalry is relied upon for prompt and rapid movements; hence, the rapid gushing forth of the *blood from the winepress, even unto the horse bridles*, represents the rapid success, ultimately, of the blood of atonement everywhere throughout the world; for, *a thousand and six hundred furlongs*, or two hundred miles, the distance across Italy, represents the whole world. *And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs*.

CHAPTER XV.

- 1 *The seven angels with the seven last plagues.* 3 *The song of them that overcome the beast.* 7 *The seven vials full of the wrath of God.*

AND I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XV.

Verse 1 *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous,—*After his soul-stirring address to the churches, St. John *looked*, and, for the edification of the church and the world, *a door was opened in heaven; . . . and he saw, and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. . . .* And he saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within, and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. . . . *And he saw when the Lamb opened the seals, and heard what followed.*

. . . . And he saw seven angels stand before God, to whom were given seven trumpets. And he saw another angel, who came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer.

. . . . And he heard the seven angels sound, and diligently noted what followed. . . . And he saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. . . . And he saw a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun. . . . And there appeared another wonder in heaven; a great red dragon. . . . And he saw, also, a beast rise up out of the sea. . . . And another beast coming up out of the earth. . . . And again, he looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on mount Sion. . . . And yet again, he looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man. All these things, and many others, of vast importance, and of thrilling interest, did St. John see; and, in the most appropriate and impressive imagery, has he already presented to the contemplation of the reader these thrilling scenes. And here, at last, he lets us know that he is about to finish this part of the great, the wonderful picture. And as mercy, in God's

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire : and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

gracious providence, comes before judgment, so these plagues are the last scenes presented in the prophetic panorama. *For in them is filled up the wrath of God.* And, indeed, his judgments are his marvelous works. *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues ; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.*

Verse 2 *And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire* :—In chap. iv. 6, we read, *And before the throne* (on which Jesus Christ sat) *there was a sea of glass like unto crystal.* This transparent sea may represent the perfect clearness with which Jesus Christ looks into human character, and even the secret purposes and motives of man ; or, it may indicate the clearness of the revelations which he has made of God and of the true religion ; or, it may represent both of these important facts. And *the sea of glass mingled with fire* may, and almost certainly does, represent the Protestant church and people, as they stand in contrast with Rome. Superstition being the secret of the power maintained by the clergy over the laity, and of the papacy over both. And as mystery is favorable to superstition, every thing on the subject of religion is, with a papist, shrouded in the deepest, the most profound mystery ; nothing is clear, nothing is transparent ; nor do they expect the refining power of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts : all is done by penance. But the Protestants, who had gotten the victory over the beast, having established an entirely separate church organization and jurisdiction, and rejecting their superstition, enjoyed the light of divine illumination,

3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are thy works*, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are thy ways*, thou King of saints.

4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou only art holy*: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

and the life of divine love; and denying the merit of works, and expecting salvation by grace alone, they obtained the victory *over his image, and over his mark*, even refusing to be called by *his name*; so that they *stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God*. They extol not their many prayers, nor trust in the prayers of saints; neither do they trust in their great sufferings, though many of them suffered martyrdom. They have no harps with which to praise themselves, *having only the harps of God*.

Verse 3 *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb*,—As St. Paul says, in Hebrews iii. 5, Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ, as a Son over his own house—whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end—is Lord, or *King of saints*. So that *the song of Moses is the song of the Lamb*; and these saints who sing the praise of God and the Lamb, sing in harmony with Moses, for all the sacrifices and services ordained by Moses pointed directly to the promised Messiah. *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.*

Verse 4 *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall*

5 And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened :

come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made manifest.—Now, after the manifest power and glory of God, and his abundant mercy have been fully revealed in Christ, and after his judgments, too, have been made manifest, what nation, what people, or what individual, shall worship any idol, or false god, and *shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

Verse 5 *And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened :—*The tabernacle and temple, here, manifestly represent the true tabernacle and temple, the church of God, now that the true light shines by the gospel, contrasted with the typical sacrifices, under the law, and the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the temple of Jerusalem, so clearly, so fully, and so elaborately, set forth by St. Paul, in Hebrews ix., from which we only take a brief extract, but which the reader should not fail carefully to examine throughout: Now, when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people ; the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing ; which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience ; *which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of

6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

reformation. But Christ being come, a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. *And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.*

Verse 6 *And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.*—We see, from the attire of these messengers, coming forth from the holy sanctuary of God, that they, though bearers of judgments, are as pure and holy, in their character and purposes, as the messengers of his mercies and all his benefits.

Verse 7 *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*—This one of the four beasts can be no other but the fourth beast, the fully revealed, the perfect light of the Christian religion, of Christian truth and righteousness; consequently, none who now willingly and persistently reject the light, which now shines so resplendently, can possibly escape the righteous *vials*, or *full cups*, of the *wrath of God*. And this righteous displeasure may be the more justly and awfully feared, because he who has been thus incensed, *liveth for ever and ever*. *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*

8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

Verse 8 *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power;*—This verse very clearly alludes to the manifested presence, the great glory and terrible majesty of God, as it was revealed in the bush that burned with fire and upon the mountain which became vocal with the thundering voice of Him who spake unto Moses out of the cloud; but especially to the manifested presence, the Shekinah, which appeared between the wings of the cherubim, overshadowing the mercy-seat in the most holy place in the temple, into which none could enter but the high priest alone, and he only once a year, and then not without blood; which he offered for his own sins and for the sins of the people. And though this is not Sinai, but Mount Sion, and though we are not under the law, but under grace, yet when the wickedness of man brings upon him the judgments of God, his presence is terrible majesty; for, as St. Paul says to the Hebrews, *though* ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which *voice* they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake: but ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the

spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of Abel—yet*, see that ye refuse not him that speaketh : for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven : whose voice then shook the earth : but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear : for our God is a consuming fire. *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power ; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.* This Chapter is introductory to Chapter XVI.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 *The angels pour out their vials full of wrath.* 6 *The plagues that follow thereupon.* 15 *Christ cometh as a thief.* *Blessed are they that watch.*

AND I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XVI.

Verse 1 *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels*,—This great voice, which proceeds and comes forth from the sacred *temple* of divine truth, is the all-powerful voice of retributive justice, addressed authorita-

2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and *upon* them which worshipped his image.

3 And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead *man*: and every living soul died in the sea.

tively to these messengers of *wrath*. And the command is imperative. God's righteous indignation burns fiercely against all unrighteousness; and especially against the sins of those who have been taught of God to know the truth. *Earth* in this verse seems to be employed in an unrestricted sense. *Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*

Verse 2 *And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth*;—This first messenger seems to be the bearer of God's judgments against the misimprovement and the downright abuse of the great national or administrative power of Rome; for *earth* here is certainly the Roman empire. And her sin is idolatry, which she not only encouraged, but peremptorily required of her citizens, and enforced obedience to that requirement by the secular arm. And the punishment inflicted for this sin is represented by that *noisome and grievous*, and often fatal disease, which is the natural consequence of excessive lewdness, or fornication, which is idolatry. And Rome's pains, in her decline and fall, in the death-throes of her dissolution, were in proportion to her vitality; and all this is forcibly represented by this *noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast*, the errors of antichrist. *And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth*; and there fell a *noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.*

Verse 3 *And the second angel poured out his vial upon*

4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

the sea;—As *earth*, in the preceding verse, represents the secular power of Rome, so *sea*, here, represents the sacred, and as *the blood* of animal bodies receives from the oxygen of the atmosphere, as from the breath of God, and contains the vital principle, and as in man, it is the highest order of organic life, so when defunct, it is the most loathsome, the most corrupt and corrupting, of all decomposing substances, so that it becomes impossible for life to be sustained amid this deadly infection; consequently, it does most fitly represent the dead state and deadly influence of the Roman church, as having degenerated from the purity and spirituality and the life of divine worship, into corrupt and corrupting idolatry, by perverting the sacred communion of the body and blood of Christ by faith into the sacrifice of the mass. *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.*

Verse 4 *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.*—*Rivers and fountains of waters*, here represent multitudes of pagans, who devoutly worship the gods of their fathers, and whose worship is as pure as may be without the light of divine revelation; but receiving what they know of God, and the true worship, from the Romans, whose light had become darkness, that which should have been a blessing became a curse unto them, and they were corrupted by it. *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.*

Verse 5 *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou*

6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.

art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.—As *waters*, by an unqualified or unrestricted use of the word, seems to represent all sincere worshipers, without regard to their knowledge of the proper object of worship, so *the angel of these waters* seems to be the comprehensive and tolerant spirit which takes cognizance of all worship, irrespective of the knowledge and cultivation of the worshipers, but with strict regard to his honesty and sincerity. And this spirit of equity recognizes God as being the righteous Judge of all men, irrespective of times and circumstances. *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.*

Verse 6 *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.*—The practice of wanton cruelty among men of common humanity provokes unrelenting severity in return, but when practiced upon the meek, the unresisting *saints and prophets* of God, vengeance belongeth unto God, and he will repay. And to have the cup of *blood* put to the unwilling lip *to drink* seems to be equivalent to the sentence, that he that sheddeth the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, *because he is worthy.*

Verse 7 *And I heard another out of the altar say,*—And if after all that is said in the two verses above, there are still any inclined to contest the righteousness of the sentence, this *other angel out of the altar* settles the controversy. For he is the Holy Ghost. *And I heard another*

8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun ; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

Verse 8 *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun*;—*The sun*, in this prophecy, is the appropriate emblem of the clear, strong, and fully revealed light of divine truth, as there is nothing else in all the material universe, at least within the range of man's senses, that could so well represent it. And when the light and knowledge of God, and of his will, are so fully and clearly revealed, and this light is willfully and persistently rejected, it does seem that no punishment could be more appropriate than to be cursed with judicial blindness, as were the unbelieving Jews, as St. Paul plainly tells them, by applying Isaiah's prophecy to their perverseness and obstinacy, in Acts xxviii. 24, 25, 26, 27: And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. And now these perverse and vilely corrupt Romans, though professed believers in Christ, and with the intensified light of the Reformation shining upon them, refuse to conform to the precepts of the great Teacher, in whom they profess to believe. For the faithful and exemplary lives of many of the Reformers was a living commentary on the

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

truth and purity of the Christian religion, but a withering, a scorching rebuke against the corruption of these men, the adherents of Rome. *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.*

Verse 9 *And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues:*—As the light of the material sun is not enough for the natural world, and could not, without his *heat*, cause a single plant to germinate, so the light of divine truth is not sufficient for the moral world without the living and life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, to accompany the light that is in the head, and to warm the heart, and give spiritual life to the soul. And this moral power, this spiritual, this divine life, glowing so warmly in the Reformers, was what so scorched, with great heat, these men who were worshipping creatures, the sacraments, the saints, and images; and glorifying these things, thus and in many ways blaspheming the sacred Name, they repented not to give God the glory. *And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.*

Verse 10 *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast;*—To those who with the means of a correct knowledge of God, and of his will before their eyes, are nevertheless guilty of idolatry, every thing becomes a curse, a plague. For the greater the light which shines round about them, the greater the privileges unimproved,

11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

the greater the mercies abused, the greater the guilt of the sinner. And even error itself, leading its votaries into absurdities palpable, and into difficulties inextricable, so that the worshipers of antichrist found error, the seat of the beast, a gloomy kingdom; for the arguments of the Reformers were so clear, so conclusive, that they seeing and feeling that even a plausible answer was impracticable, could but rant and vehemently blaspheme. *And they gnawed their tongues for pain. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,*

Verse 11 *And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.*—The allusion here to *the noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast*, in verse 2, is as plain as to the *gnawing their tongues for pain*, in this same sentence, in the preceding verse; so that the application, as we have made it, of the pouring out of all these five *vials of the wrath of God*, upon these intimately connected scenes, is here conclusively proven to be just.

Verse 12 *And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates;*—In the early and rude states of society, when the weapons of war were simple and feeble, and the means of transportation across great waters very imperfect, the Euphrates was quite an effectual barrier between the nations east and west of it. Consequently, it seems to be employed here, and it really is a very appropriate figure, to represent the great waters west of Europe and Africa, which had always been an insuperable barrier

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

to the march of empire in that direction. And to overcome this barrier required genius and enterprise, and a spirit of independency, at war with the interests of the papacy, and a real plague to the beast. It is readily admitted that, to say the water of the great river Euphrates was dried up, is a strong figure. But, before the development of the genius by which the New World was discovered, which seemed most impracticable, the *drying up of the Euphrates*, or the crossing of the boundless ocean? And yet by this, and by this alone, *might the way of the kings of the east be prepared.* This plague upon the beast was, perhaps, a greater blessing to man than any of the five that preceded it; but mighty efforts were made, and are still being made, to counteract its good influence.

Verse 13 *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*—Whatever these *three unclean spirits like frogs* may distinctively represent, they are opposed to genius, they are opposed to free inquiry, they are opposed to truth. They are antirepublican, antiphilosophical, antichristian. This is antichrist.

Verse 14 *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles,*—These foul, these diabolical spirits, can tolerate almost any thing else more willingly than peace; nor will they ever cease to *go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world*, both east and west of the great ocean, and to instigate them to deeds of blood and carnage, until

15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, be gathered together to make war against him that shall sit on the white horse, and against his army; where and when shall be fought the battle of that great day of God Almighty; when the beast shall be taken, and with him the false prophet. These both shall be cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Verse 15 *Behold, I come as a thief.*—St. John here quotes the teachings, if not the precise words, of Christ, in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to this great, decisive battle for the destruction of antichrist, as well as to his coming to judge the world at the last day. The very obvious meaning of which is, that no one can, by any possible means, previously know the time of these great events, though they are the subjects of so many prophecies. But, for the encouragement of the faithful, a blessing is here pronounced by St. John, in imitation of Christ, upon him that shall be found watching, at the coming of his Lord. *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.* Clean garments represent pure, untarnished virtue, which, in this connection, is to be pure from the sin of idolatry.

Verse 16 *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*—This great, decisive conflict between Christ and antichrist will be provi-

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

dentially brought about; for St. John here introduces the same person, who says, *Behold, I come as a thief, as he who shall gather them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.* Many proper names, in many languages, have a meaning attached to them; and most names in all languages, anciently, had quite a significant application to the person or thing named. But we may not know much of the import of *Armageddon* until the time and the circumstances of the place shall develop its signification.

Verse 17 *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air;*—*The air* is the vital and the all-pervading element, and as such, more appropriately than any thing else in nature, represents the Holy Spirit. Acts ii.: And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Again, in St. John's Gospel, chap. iii. 8, Christ says to Nicodemus, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. The *pouring out of the fourth vial upon the sun*, so intensifying the light and power of divine truth as to *scorch men with great heat*, was an intensely severe plague upon error, but the *pouring out of the seventh vial into the air*, bringing against error, against the beast and the false prophet, against antichrist, the direct and

18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and so great.*

19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

almighty power of the Holy Spirit, is quite entirely insupportable. And, as it is now clearly seen and understood in the church of God, that truth is fully established by the destruction of error, that Christ reigns, now that antichrist is destroyed, *there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne saying, It is done.* The last battle between truth and error, between *Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels*, between Christ and antichrist, has been fought. And peace having come at last, truth having prevailed, Christ shall now reign.

Verse 18 *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings*;—In this and the following verses of this chapter St. John reviews some of the last scenes of this decisive conflict between truth and error, in language so strong, by employing figures so bold and so forcible, that it really seems impossible to conceive how it could have been done more impressively. *Voices* well represent the eloquence of truth; *thunders*, the great force and power of it; and *lightnings*, the almost insupportable brilliancy of clearly revealed truth. And this unprecedentedly *great earthquake* represents a revolution, such as has never before been realized. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*

Verse 19 *And the great city was divided into three parts*,—This *great city* seems to represent revealed religion, by

20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, which some correct knowledge of the existence of God, and of the true worship, is communicated, in contradistinction to *the cities of the nations*, which represent paganism. And the three grand general divisions of *the great city* seem to be, Christianity, Judaism, and Mohammedanism; and *the cities of the nations*, the multiform worship of idolaters. And all of these *fell* in the *great battle of Armageddon*; to be rebuilt no more, until *Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out, to deceive the nations*. And, besides the fall of Paganism, Mohammedanism, and Judaism—every thing that is false and impure connected with Christianity itself—shall be destroyed. *And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

Verse 20 *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*—Islands seem to represent all governments allied to the Roman Catholic faith, or environed and controlled by the great tide of its influence; and, perhaps, also, all Mohammedan governments. The Jews have no nationality, and, almost certainly, never will have. And *the mountains* represent all pagan governments. Hence, when *Babylon* shall have been destroyed; when *the beast and the false prophet* shall have been *cast into the lake of fire*; and Satan chained, and *cast into the bottomless pit*; then, but not until then, the purifying of the Church of God, the perfecting of the saints, shall be consummated. Nor shall there be a government administered otherwise than upon purely Christian principles. And then, truly, shall Millennium come. *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

Verse 21 *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven,*

every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

every stone *about the weight of a talent*:—This great master painter touches again this part of the grand picture, which is already so well finished, and develops another very important feature—*men* here, as well as throughout the picture, representing Rome and her adherents. And the congealing of the pure waters of heaven into *great hail* well represents the numerous Protestant denominations of Christians, which, when the untoward winds of petty controversy upon unimportant points of difference among themselves, shall cease to drive them so furiously against each other, shall fall with such crushing force and effect upon the adherents of Rome, and shall become unto them such an *exceeding great* and intolerable *plague* that *men will blaspheme God because of the plague of the hail.* And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

CHAPTER XVII.

- 1 *A woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, with a golden cup in her hand, sitteth upon the beast, 5 which is great Babylon, the mother of all abominations. 9 The interpretation of the seven heads, 12 and the ten horns. 14 The victory of the Lamb.*

AND there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come

NOTES.—CHAPTER XVII.

Verse 1 *And there came one of the seven angels which*

hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters;

2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

*had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither;—*Perhaps we cannot with certainty determine which of the seven angels St. John here speaks of; most probably, however, it is the seventh, that one which was employed as the instrument in bringing upon the papal power the last, the final judgment, in the decisive battle of Armageddon. This angel, wishing to afford St. John a clearer view of the true import of this scene, invites him up, by the spirit of prophecy which was upon him, to such an intimacy with it as to enable him to interpret the figures already employed, by plainer ones. *The great whore* is the papal power, and *the many waters* upon which she *sitteth*, the multitudes of people upon whom this power rests. *I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters;*

Verse 2 *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication,—**The kings of the earth* are the emperors of the Roman world, and their *fornication with the great whore* consists in the coöperation of the secular with the papal power to coerce uniform and universal conformity to the idolatrous forms of the Roman worship; so that the infatuated inhabitants of the Roman world, influenced partly by a superstitious reverence for the papal authority, and partly by the terrible power of the secular arm, are *made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

Verse 3 *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wil-*

4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication;

derness :—This carrying away of the apostle *into the wilderness* was his being led by the spirit of prophecy to pursue the captive church of God into pagan Rome, where he saw her humiliating condition for so many centuries, and then her ultimate and glorious triumph, which have already been most graphically delineated and wonderfully painted by the most sublime imagery, but which he is now to be still better prepared to finish, with that perfectly masterly hand, which has no competitor. *The woman* here is the Roman church, at and after the time when she took her seat upon imperial authority, under the reign of Constantine the Great. And the *blasphemy* of this *beast*, the Roman power, consists, in part at least, in his claim to reign by divine right, politically and religiously, over the liberties and consciences of all men. The *seven heads and ten horns* will require special attention in the notes on verses 9 and 12 of this chapter. *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*

Verse 4 *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour*,—*The woman*, the papacy of Rome, after that she was fairly seated and fully established *upon the beast*, is most graphically represented by being so gorgeously arrayed *in purple and scarlet colour*. The manner in which she is *decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand*, represents her high claims to purity, dignity, and sacred honor and regard, and of presenting pure worship to the true God. But her *golden cup*, instead of being filled with incense, fragrant and pure, is *full of*

5 And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

abominations and filthiness of her fornication, which is her idolatry.

Verse 5 *And upon her forehead was a name written,—* The creed of the woman, represented here by *a name written upon her forehead*, is quite a considerable affair, and implicit faith in this creed is most artfully and certainly obtained, from all the vast multitudes *upon which the woman sitteth*, upon which her authority rests, by carefully shrouding the designs of all the gorgeous ceremonies of her imposing service in the most profound *mystery*. And as this is the most effectual way to cultivate superstition, which so effectually fosters idolatry with all its corruptions and corrupting tendencies and influences, hence this wonderful name. *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

Verse 6 *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus:—* Artful and effectual as this creed, and the manner of imposing it upon the multitude was, there was, nevertheless, some worshipers too pure and faithful to be corrupted by it. But what could not be accomplished by policy, in securing perfect uniformity in all the formulary of the imposing service, must be accomplished by force. For against such high-toned pretensions and claims irregularity is heresy, and heresy is treason; hence, *the blood of the saints and martyrs*

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

of Jesus flows so freely that *the woman* is intoxicated with it. And for a church, claiming to be the church of Christ, to be guilty of such horrible work was truly marvelous. *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*

Verse 7 *And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel?*—This *angel*, or messenger, understanding so clearly himself the true character of *the woman*, and of *the beast that carrieth her*, as not to wonder at all at the bloodshed and carnage produced by them, he inquires of St. John, emphatically, *Wherefore didst thou marvel?* And he proposes to reveal unto him this *marvelous mystery*, not of the woman's corruption and the beast's fierceness only, but also, the *mystery of the seven heads*, and of the *ten horns*.

Verse 8 *The beast that thou sawest was, and is not;*—The existence and influence of *the beast*, or great Roman power anciently, under the great Augustus, was a great impressive fact in the pagan world, politically and religiously. And the great business of the Romans was military training and military enterprise. And the god of the Romans was the god of war. And the Roman empire being the empire of the world, the religion of the Romans was, as it were, the authorized religion of the world. But after the coming of Christ—after the rising of the full-orbed sun of

9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

revealed truth—the perfect light of the perfect day—now paganism is naught, and idolatry is more wicked than ever before. But it shall rise up, or *ascend out of the great darkness*, which shall so universally prevail for many centuries, as it were, the darkness *of the bottomless pit*. And the wicked power that shall drag the world, with itself, into such darkness, shall itself be doomed, *and go into perdition*, as we shall see in chap. xix. The power and influence, the magnificence and splendor, the imposing ceremonies and charming music, and many other things, by which *the woman and the beast* shall distinguish themselves, shall excite the wonder and admiration of all men who are not truly and experimentally Christians—that is, all those who do not, in the exercise of living faith and with true hearts, receive Christ as their Saviour from all sin. *The names written in the book of life stand in contradistinction to the name written upon the woman's forehead.*

Verse 9 *And here is the mind which hath wisdom.*—Here, as well as in chap. xiii. 18, St. John recommends to us the propriety of laboring to comprehend the true signification, and the proper application, of the dark sayings found in God's book, even the most enigmatically intricate. *The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.* The seven hills on which the city of Rome is built may possibly be, ay, even probably are, alluded to; but this is only an allusion; for by *seven mountains*, St. John means seven forms of government, all pagan, or at least, all idolatrous. We will here quote from Newton on the Prophecies, London edition, reprinted in Philadelphia, p. 573, a passage embodying what we believe to be the true signification, and the proper application, of verses 9, 10, 11:

10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

"As the *seven heads* signify *seven mountains*, so they also signify *seven kings*, reigning over the seven mountains, (ver. 10, 11:) καὶ βασιλεῖς ἑπτὰ εἰσιν, 'And they are seven kings,' or *kingdoms*, or *forms of government*, as the word imports, and hath been shown to import in former instances. 'Five are fallen,' five of these forms of government are already past; 'and one is,' the sixth is now subsisting. The *five fallen* are *kings*, and *consuls*, and *dictators*, and *decemvirs*, and *military tribunes with consular authority*; as they are enumerated and distinguished by those who should best know, the two greatest Roman historians, Livy and Tacitus. The *sixth* is the power of the *Cæsars*, or *emperors*, which was subsisting at the time of the vision. An end was put to the imperial name in the year 476, by Odoacer, king of the Heruli, who having taken Rome, deposed Momyllus Augustulus, the last emperor of the West. He and his successors, the Ostrogoths, assumed the title of kings of Italy; but though the name was changed, the power still continued much the same. This, therefore, cannot well be called a new form of government; it may rather be considered as a continuation of the imperial power, or as a renovation of the kingly authority. *Consuls* are reckoned but one form of government, though their office was frequently suspended, and after a time restored again; and in the same manner *kings* may be counted but one form of government, though the name was resumed after an interval of so many years. A new form of government was not erected, till Rome fell under the obedience of the Eastern emperor, and the emperor's lieutenant, the exarch of Ravenna, dissolved all the former magistracies, and constituted a Duke of Rome, to

11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

govern the people, and to pay tribute to the exarchate of Ravenna. Rome had never experienced this form of government before; and this I conceive to be *the other*, which in the apostle's days, 'was not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.' For Rome was reduced to a dukedom, tributary to the exarch of Ravenna, by Longinus, who was sent exarch in the year 566, according to some accounts, or in the year 568, according to others; and the city revolted from the eastern emperor to the pope in the year 727: which is *a short space* in comparison of the imperial power, which preceded, and lasted above 500 years; and in comparison of the papal power, which followed, and hath now continued about a thousand years. But still possibly you may hesitate, whether this is properly a new form of government, Rome being still subject to the imperial power, by being subject to the Greek emperor's deputy, the exarch of Ravenna; and according as you determine this point, 'the beast that was and is not,' *was* while idolatrous, and *was not* while not idolatrous, will appear to be the *seventh* or *eighth*. If you reckon this a new form of government, the beast that now is is *the eighth*; if you do not reckon this a new form of government, the beast is *of the seven*; but whether he be *the seventh* or *eighth*, he is the last form of government, 'and goeth into perdition.' It appears evidently, that the sixth form of government, which was subsisting in St. John's time, is the imperial; and what form of government hath succeeded to that in Rome, and hath continued for *a long space* of time, but the papal? The beast, therefore, upon which the woman rideth, is the Roman gov-

13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

ernment in its last form ; and this, all must acknowledge, is the papal, and not the imperial." *The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.* "Having explained the mystery of *the seven heads*, the angel proceeds to the explanation of *the ten horns*, (verses 12-14.) 'The ten horns are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet;' and consequently, they were not in being at the time of the vision ; and, indeed, the Roman empire was not divided into ten kingdoms, till some time after it was become Christian. 'But *they* receive power as kings one hour, (*μίαν ὥραν, at the same time, or for the same length of time,*) with the beast.' It is true in both senses, they rise and fall together with the beast ; and, consequently, they are not to be reckoned before the rise and establishment of the beast ; and accordingly, when a catalogue was produced of these ten kings or kingdoms in a dissertation upon Daniel, they were exhibited as they stood in the eighth century, which is the time of the rise and establishment of the beast. Kingdoms they might be before, but they were not before kingdoms or *horns* of the beast, till they embraced his religion, and submitted to his authority ; and the beast strengthened them, as they again strengthened the beast. It is upon the seventh, or last head of the beast, that the horns are seen growing together, that is, upon the Roman empire in its seventh or last form of government ; and they are not like the *heads*, successive, but contemporary kingdoms : 'These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto

14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him *are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

the beast,' which is easily understood and applied to the princes and states in communion with the church of Rome. However they may differ in other respects, yet they agree in submitting implicitly to the authority of the Roman church, and in defending its rights and prerogatives against all opposers. But where were ever ten kings or kingdoms, who were all unanimous in their submission to the Roman empire, and voluntarily and of their own accord contributed *their power and strength*, their forces and riches to support and maintain it? 'These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them;' they persecute the true church of Christ, but the true church shall in the end prevail and triumph over them; which particulars have been fulfilled in part already, and will be more fully accomplished hereafter." *For he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings.* The same thing, which is so forcibly represented in chap. xvi. 20, and in many other places previously noted in the prophecy, is clearly and plainly stated here, namely, that Christianity shall ultimately be triumphantly and universally victorious and successful; and shall become the unmolested and unmixed religion of man universally. Moreover, all rulers, being themselves governed by its pure principles, shall administer their governments by this same rule, minding these same things. For, indeed, it shall be by the special providence of God, that *faithful* men shall be *chosen*, selected, and *called* to this work, as well as to leading in direct acts of devotion. Then shall it be truly said, *Christ is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

15 And he said unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Verse 15 *And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*—"In the former part of this description (v. 1) *the whore* is represented like ancient Babylon, *sitting upon many waters*; and *these waters* are here (v. 15) said expressly to signify 'peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.' So many words in the plural number fitly denote the great extensiveness of her power and jurisdiction; and it is a remarkable peculiarity of Rome, different from all other governments in the world, that her authority is not limited to her own immediate subjects, and confined within the bounds of her own dominions, but extends over all kingdoms and countries professing the same religion. She herself glories in the title of the *Catholic* church, and exults in the number of her votaries as a certain proof of the true religion. Cardinal Bellarmin's first note of the true church is *the very name of the Catholic church*; and his fourth note is *amplitude, or multitude and variety of believers*; for the truly catholic church, says he, ought not only to comprehend all ages, but likewise all places, all nations, all kinds of men. But notwithstanding the general current in her favor, the tide shall turn against her; and the hands which helped to raise her shall also pull her down (v. 16.) 'The ten horns shall hate the whore,' that is, by a common figure of the whole for a part, *some* of the ten kings, for others (xviii. 9) 'shall bewail her and lament for her,' and (xix. 19) shall fight and perish in the cause of the beast. Some of the kings who formerly loved her, grown sensible of her exorbitant exactions and oppressions, shall *hate her*; shall strip, and expose, and plunder her, and utterly consume

16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

her with fire. Rome, therefore, will finally be destroyed by some of the princes who are reformed, or shall be reformed, from popery; and as the kings of France have contributed greatly to her advancement, it is not impossible nor improbable that some time or other they may also be the principal authors of her destruction. France hath already shown some tendencies toward a reformation, and therefore may appear more likely to accomplish it. Nay, even the kings of Spain and Portugal, their most catholic and faithful majesties, as they are styled, have restrained the power of the pope and the inquisition, and have not only banished the Jesuits from their respective kingdoms, but have likewise insisted upon the suppression of that order, which may be considered as leading steps to some farther revolution. Such a revolution may more reasonably be expected, because (v. 17) this infatuation of popish princes is permitted by Divine Providence only for a certain period, 'until the words of God shall be fulfilled,' and particularly the words of the prophet Daniel (vii. 25, 26,) 'They shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time. But *then* (as it immediately follows) the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.' Little doubt can remain after this what idolatrous church was meant by *the whore of Babylon*; but for the greater assuredness it is added by the angel (v. 18,) 'The woman which thou sawest is that great city.' The angel had undertaken to 'tell the mystery of the woman, and of the beast.' He hath explained the mystery of the beast, and of his seven heads and ten horns; and his explanation of the mystery of the

17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

woman is 'that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.' And what city at the time of the vision *reigned over the kings of the earth* but Rome? She hath too ever since *reigned over the kings of the earth*, if not with temporal, yet at least with spiritual authority. In the arts of government she hath far exceeded all the cities both of ancient and of modern times; as if she had constantly remembered and put in practice the advice of the poet, (Virg. *Æn.* vi. 852,)

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
Hæ tibi erunt artes.

Rome, therefore, is evidently and undeniably *this great city*; and that Christian and not heathen, papal and not imperial Rome, was meant, hath appeared in several instances, and will appear in several more." *And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

1 *Babylon is fallen.* 4 *The people of God commanded to depart out of her.* 9 *The kings of the earth,* 11 *with*

the merchants and mariners, lament over her. 20 The saints rejoice for the judgments of God upon her.

AND after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XVIII.

Verse 1 *And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power;—*This other angel which St. John saw come down from the pure church of God, from heaven, to pronounce this righteous sentence against the errors and corruptions of this doomed city, or corrupt and corrupting church which has so long reigned over the kings of the earth, seems to be truth, divinely revealed truth, *having great power*. And, indeed, the moral power of truth, upon cultivated society, outweighs all other powers combined. And as the refulgent light of truth is so often, in this prophecy, represented by the sun, well may the apostle here say of this angel, that *the earth was lightened with his glory*.

Verse 2 *And he cried mightily with a strong voice,—*The eloquent voice of truth is the strongest voice ever brought to bear upon cultivated society, and especially is it mighty when wielded against the corrupt and corrupting errors of superstition and idolatry, which can never bear exposure to its brilliancy. And this strong voice announces the fallen state of this corrupt church, or city, in an exceedingly emphatic manner, by this repetition, *saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen*—the same emphatic repetition having been made in chap. xiv. 8. The allusion here to the destruction and desolation of ancient Babylon is perfectly

3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

plain; and the figurative language employed here may be made plainer by reference to the figures employed by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, in reference to ancient Babylon and Tyre. For, as Bishop Newton assures us, the same Hebrew word which our English version translates "*satyrs*", the Seventy translate *δαίμονια*, *demons* or *devils*, who were supposed sometimes to take the shape of goats or satyrs, and to haunt forlorn and desolate places; and it is from the translation of the Seventy that the apostle hath borrowed his images and expressions."

Verse 3 *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*,—We have reason to believe that, if the Christian church had kept free from idolatry and corruption from the beginning, that in much less than eighteen hundred years, the last idolatrous nation, and probably the last idolatrous individual, might have been converted to Christianity. Instead of this, however, all pagan nations, as well as all Christian nations, and especially those in alliance with the Roman power, have been encouraged to indulge the natural propensity to idolatry, by the perfect licentiousness of the great whore in idolatrous practices, so that *the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies*, by furnishing her the gorgeous objects of attraction, of admiration, and of adoration, which she puts on and wears.

Verse 4 *And I heard another voice from heaven*,—This

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.

7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deli-

voice of warning seems to proceed from the same angel, or messenger, who in chap. xiv. 9, 10, gives the solemn warning that *if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation*; and it is also the voice of retributive justice, as well as a voice of warning, as we shall see in verse 6, as it is also in the preceding chapter. And this voice calls to the people of God, saying, *Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

Verse 5 *For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.*—This text is a perfect parallel with the concluding part of chap. xvi. 19: *And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.* So that we see the scenes of chaps. xviii. xix. are destined to constitute that great, that mighty revolution, which is represented in chap. xvi. 18, by a *great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth.*

Verse 6 *Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works:*—Those who have been injured, oppressed, and even corrupted, when properly enlightened upon the subjects of pure religion and good government, are destined, in the providence of God, to be employed in chastising the corrupt city. *In the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.*

Verse 7 *How much she hath glorified herself, and lived*

ciously, so much torment and sorrow give her ; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire : for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her ;—As the punishment shall be inflicted by the hand of the oppressed, so shall it be, in kind and degree, suitable to the offense. For she hath not only exalted herself, to sit a queen, but hath also glorified herself, or claimed divine honors, consequently how much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her ; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

Verse 8 *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine ; and she shall be utterly burned with fire :—Her plagues, whatever they shall be, are here represented by death, and mourning, and famine ; and they shall come suddenly and simultaneously. The destruction of a city, when utterly consumed by fire, is the figure employed to represent the destruction of this false prophet, with the beast that carrieth her, when God's righteous judgment and final sentence shall be passed upon her. And she shall be utterly burned with fire : for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

Verses 9, 10 *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her,—These kings*

11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

or kingdoms that have gone heartily and cordially into the idolatrous practices of Rome, seem to be those who were in league with the papal power, in oppressing and corrupting mankind, and though they have abandoned her in her extremity, *for the fear of her torment*, yet, nevertheless, they *bewail her, and lament for her*, when they, *standing afar off*, behold her utter destruction, *the smoke of her burning*. *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

Verse 11 *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her*;—This interested sympathy of the merchants of the earth with this great, this mighty city, in the day of her desolation and destruction, is very poor condolence, for it is merely because *no man buyeth their merchandise any more*.

Verses 12, 13 *The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls*,—This extensive catalogue of necessities, conveniences, and luxuries, so specifically enumerated in verses 12 and 13, well represent the way of life

14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

of this gorgeously arrayed woman, this mighty city, which, for so many centuries, has filled so large a space in the world's history. First, her costliness, by *gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls*; then, her authority, by *fine linen, and purple*; then, the richness of her attire, by *silk and scarlet*; then, the utility and splendor of her service, by *all manner vessels of ivory, most precious wood, brass, iron, and marble*; then, her perfumery, by *cinnamon, and frankincense, as odours, and ointments*; then, her drinks, and her diet, by *wine, oil, and fine flour*; then, for all manner of services, domestic animals, such as *sheep and horses*, and her *slaves*. And, lastly, but not of the least importance to her treasury, she makes merchandise of the *souls of men*.

Verse 14 *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee*,—And after the possession, for such a length of time, of so much treasure, and the exertion of such unlimited power and influence, and the full enjoyment of all the pleasures attendant upon wealth, power, and influence, *the fruits, all the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all*.

Verse 15 *The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her*,—The interested *weeping and wailing* of these merchants is no better sympathy than that of the kings of the earth; for these, too, *shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment*,

16 And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What *city* is like unto this great city!

19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein

Verse 16 *And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!*

Verse 17 *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought.*—Suddenly and simultaneously have all these *great riches*, which were of such vast magnitude, and of such endless variety, *come to nought*. And the *shipmasters*, commercial companies, sailors, and all marine traders, offered no better condolence than the kings and merchants of the earth; for they, too, in the apostle's vision, *stood afar off*,

Verse 18 *And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, What city is like unto this great city!*—For this city, like her type upon the seven hills, has for ages and centuries been the mistress of the world.

Verse 19 *And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing,*—In this tiresome uniformity of complaint, and pretended condolence, we may see clearly the uniform selfishness of worldly-mindedness. For kings and merchants, shipmasters and commercial companies, sailors and marine traders, with one uniform and universal chorus, *cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.*

were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

20 Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

Verse 20 *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets*;—As the great Roman power, *the woman and the beast that carrieth her*, antichrist, is, and has been, and is destined to be, until taken out of the way, the greatest foe to truth, and the greatest curse to the true church of God, and to all holy men and their appropriate work, consequently, her destruction is a matter of the greatest joy, therefore, *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets*; for God hath avenged you on her.

Verse 21 *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone*,—This *mighty angel*, who speaks so authoritatively, and acts so promptly and powerfully, seems to represent the Lord of all creatures; and the *stone like a great millstone*, which he *takes up and casts into the sea*, represents the Stone which these builders, the corrupt leaders of this great antichristian power, have, like the chief priests and Pharisees, rulers of the Jews before them, rejected: whereas, had they fallen upon and faithfully built their city upon this *Stone*, their work would have remained: to be sure, their pride and haughtiness would have been broken, but their city would have been permanent; but, now, this stone shall fall upon them. For, in Matt. xxi. 42, Jesus inquires of the Jews, and may not the same inquiry be made of the Romans, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? There-

22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

fore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder. *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

Verse 22 *And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters,—The voice of these harpers, and musicians, and of these pipers, and trumpeters,* may well represent the systematic and scientific performances on instruments, and of vocalists, for which this communion of professing Christians is so uniformly and so universally celebrated; but which, after the righteous judgment of God shall come upon her for her corruptions, *shall be heard no more at all in her*; and, notwithstanding the architectural skill for which the builders of her magnificent and splendid cathedrals have been so long and so universally celebrated, *no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more at all in her*; and, notwithstanding the rich and luxurious life she has so long lived, even the sound of a millstone, to prepare the only indispensable necessary of life, water only excepted, *shall be heard no more at all in her*.

Verse 23 *And the light of a candle shall shine no more at*

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets; and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

all in thee;—And, notwithstanding the light of a candle is and has been esteemed so sacred, as never to be extinguished, but to be kept burning perpetually, by day as well as by night, when her judgment shall come, the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in her; and though the multitudes of opulent members in her communion are cheered with such music, and revel so voluptuously in such splendid mansions, where the wedding-feast has so long been such a magnificent affair, and in the spacious halls of which the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride have been accustomed to reverberate so joyously, yet after her judgment shall have come, the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in her. And the great affluence of her merchants, giving them a commanding and controlling influence in and over the commerce of the nations; and so wielding, as she has so long done, the power of the keys, the power of the scepter, the power of the purse, and the power of the sword; together with the still greater power of the boundless influence of her peculiar policy upon the superstitions of the populace: so that, by her sorceries were all nations deceived. For thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

Verse 24 *And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints,—*The bloody persecutions of the Roman power against those who, for conscience' sake, refused to conform to her requirements, form a large part of the world's history for many centuries; and the cruel wars which she has waged against political and religious liberty, fills a still greater space in history; so that the strong language in the sentence of her condemnation is fully justified: *And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

CHAPTER XIX.

- 1 *God is praised in heaven for judging the great whore, and avenging the blood of his saints.* 7 *The marriage of the Lamb.* 10 *The angel will not be worshipped.* 17 *The fowls called to the great slaughter.*

AND after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

2 For true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XIX.

Verse 1 *And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven,*—After the announcement of the fearful fall of Babylon, and after a somewhat elaborate detail of her deep and contaminating corruption, and after her arraignment and trial, and her righteous sentence by the righteous Judge of all moral creatures, a great revival of pure religion shall break out in the true church of God; for, *After these things St. John heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God:*

Verse 2 *For true and righteous are his judgments;*—For, in order to save the innocent from contamination, when idolatry cannot be corrected, its votaries must be exterminated. For, for the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, Jesus Christ must reign without a rival: great Babylon, anti-christ, must and shall be destroyed. And the vast amount of mischief already done cries aloud for vengeance against her. And, as St. John beheld in the vision, so the day is approaching when the church and the world shall have realized the great fact, that *God hath judged the great whore,*

3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

Verse 3 *And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.*—This great and glorious praise shall be long continued, and oft repeated. The absolute perpetuity of her punishment, in strong contrast with her temporary purgatorial fires, is here, as in chap. xiv. 11, and in many other places, so unequivocally stated by the Holy Spirit in the word of truth, that it becomes us to receive it without caviling.

Verse 4 *And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts*—After that enlightened, Christianized, and purified humanity, shall sound the note of glorious praise of Alleluia, of salvation to God and the Lamb, for the triumphant victory over error, in sweet harmony with this shall the gloriously enthroned Lamb hear the hearty *Amen; Alleluia*, from all the purified and saved of all former ages, represented here by *the four and twenty elders and the four beasts*.

Verse 5 *And a voice came out of the throne*,—As the white cloud in chap. xiv. 14, is the multitude of saints, upon which the sun of man is enthroned, wearing a golden crown, so the throne here, out of which this voice came, seems to be composed of the redeemed and saved, the saints of all ages, and the proposition is, praise to God from both branches of his great family, the saints departed from their

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

mortal bodies, and the saints still living on earth : *And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.*

Verse 6 *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude,*—It is not marvelous that the power of language should be burdened, and should labor greatly, to express, *by the voice of a great multitude, and the voice of many waters, and the voice of mighty thunderings,* to express that great praise to Almighty God for the perfect and complete victory of truth over error, of Christ over antichrist, for the unrivaled and uninterrupted reign of truth and righteousness, which the whole family of God in heaven and earth conspire to celebrate. *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

Verse 7 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him :*—Since the blessed, the happy time has come at last, when there is not a pagan left, nor a professing Christian who is an idolater, to sound a single discordant note, it is very meet and right, and our high privilege, and so *let us all and singly, universally, and without exception, be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* This glorious, this most endearing, this most sacredly sweet union and communion of the perfectly purified church of God with the Lamb that was slain, who liveth again, never can take

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

place until a perfectly faithful and unyieldingly persevering effort be made by the church to *make herself ready*.

Verse 8 *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white:*—But when this unpromising effort shall be faithfully and truly made, the promise of God stands as assurance made doubly sure, for the apostle in the vision saw, *and unto her was already granted that she should be*, and she was, *arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints*.

Verse 9 *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.*—There is some obscurity here in the grammatical construction, so that it is not very easy to determine what is the antecedent of the personal pronoun *he* in this verse, whether it is that one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, who talked with St. John, introduced in chap. xvii. 1; or that one which St. John saw in chap. xviii. 1, having great power, and by whose glory the earth was illuminated; or whether it is that mighty angel who, chap. xviii. 21, *took up a stone, like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.* Nor is this obscurity at all surprising, since, as we shall see in the next verse, St. John, the writer, was near making the fatal mistake of paying divine honors to one of the former, thinking, no doubt, that it was the latter that was addressing him, saying, *Write*, that all coming generations may read, *Blessed*, exceedingly

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it not*: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

happy shall they be *which are called unto* this transcendently glorious marriage feast, *the marriage supper of the Lamb*. And, unhesitatingly and positively does this heavenly messenger affirm that *These are the true sayings of God*.

Verse 10 *And I fell at his feet to worship him*.—St. John evidently mistook this heavenly messenger for the Angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ; otherwise he would not have fallen down *to worship him*. This angel promptly declines accepting the worship offered by St. John, assuring him that he, so far from being Christ, is his *fellow servant*, a brother who, like him, has *the testimony of Jesus*; or who, like him, is endowed with *the spirit of prophecy*. *And I fell at his feet to worship him*. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus in the spirit of prophecy.

Verse 11 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse*;—Whereas, the *white cloud* in chap. xiv. 14, on which *one sat like unto the Son of man*, represents true believers, and devoted servants of Christ, in his church, this *white horse*, upon which *he that sat* was called *Faithful and True*, represents those Christian kings and kingdoms, constituting the *army* in verse 19, against which, and against him that sat upon the horse, the beast and the kings of the earth gathered their armies together to make war. And these kings and kingdoms are the same, into whose hearts God hath put to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the

12 His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself.

13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

beast only, until the words of God shall be fulfilled: for these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. And all these exterminating judgments of God upon the corrupt city, are righteous; for in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Verse 12 *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns;*—The all-penetrating wisdom of the almighty Judge, *Faithful and True*, is most appropriately represented by *his eyes as a flame of fire*. And the complete victory of truth over error, of faithfulness over unfaithfulness, of righteousness over unrighteousness, of purity over corruption, of Christ over antichrist, is most admirably well represented, by having placed *on his head many crowns*. And now, the true character of this almighty Victor, which could only be faintly and dimly presented to our poor imperfect capacities, in this very imperfect state, by his inscrutable name, which, though *written, no man knew but he himself*. It is still, however, more and more clearly revealed by the many names which he bears in the Bible, one of which is given in the next verse, *The Word of God*.

Verse 13 *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood:*—But all these splendid and complete victories, and numerous and glorious crowns, were not obtained, and so triumphantly worn, without the shedding of blood. But, a person truly and essentially divine, in his own divine nature, *The Word of God*, could not shed blood; so *he was clothed in a human body*; for the Word, which was in the beginning, which was with God, and which was God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory,

14 And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and this vesture was most effectually saturated in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*

Verse 14 *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses,—*And then the day, the happy day, shall have fully come at last, when the Protestant Christian denominations, which have been so long engaged, so shamefully, in bitter wranglings and controversies, shall, as did Caleb and Joshua, follow the LORD fully. And these, upon states and kingdoms, purely Christian in principle and practice, as *upon white horses*, shall themselves be *clothed in the righteousness of saints—fine linen, white and clean.* And then, and not till then, shall it be truly said, *The armies in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

Verse 15 *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations;—*The word of God, the word of truth, which is the sword of the Spirit, *the sharp sword which goeth forth out of the mouth of Jesus Christ*, shall, when all Christian nations, all Christian denominations, and all Christian individuals, shall fully appreciate its importance and its power, be sent by Christian governments, Christian denominations, Bible societies, Missionary societies, Tract societies, a Christian press generally, baptized with the power of divine truth—by some, or all of these, or by some other means which God in his wisdom and mercy shall see fit to employ, shall he send the *Truth* abroad every-

16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

where, that he may first with this *smite the nations*. But let *the nations* beware, for if this be rebelliously and persistently rejected, if they be not ruled by this, *he shall rule them with a rod of iron*; for he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; *and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*.

Verse 16 *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written*,—In addition to his inscrutable name, as in verse 12, which *no man knew but he himself*, the Lamb has, upon his glorious human nature, *a name written*, which is here, as in chap. xvii. 14, emblematical of his gloriously victorious and perfectly complete triumph over all his foes. And this name presents him to us, not only as King in Zion; but, also, King of nations; all having been brought under the perfectly complete control of his perfectly pure and holy principles; or having been entirely exterminated; for he is KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Verse 17 *And I saw an angel standing in the sun*;—This *angel standing in the sun* seems to be the messenger of undiluted, pure, holy, divine truth; and his summoning, *with a loud voice, all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven*, looking intently down upon the earth for all putrid flesh, (for all this large class of unclean and hateful birds seem specially intended,) is the invitation, the call to the exterminating slaughter, since the merciful calls to salvation have been disregarded. And this great supper, suited to the morbid appetites of these filthy gormandizers, well represents

18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he

the feasts of idolaters upon meats sacrificed unto idols. And this is to be the last feast of this kind; and this is not of meats sacrificed unto idols, but the flesh of the idolaters themselves.

Verse 18 *That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men*,—*Kings and captains* here seem to represent regal power, and *mighty men*, ecclesiastical authority; and the next two clauses of the sentence is a recapitulation of the *mighty men*, seated upon the *kings and captains*; for the *kings and the captains* are the *horses*, and the *mighty men* are those *that sit on them*. And their armies, which shall, in this great conflict, be so completely destroyed, so utterly annihilated, shall be composed of *all men, both free and bond, both great and small*, who shall adhere to their vilely corrupt cause.

Verse 19 *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies*,—It seems that, in this final conflict, in this last great battle between truth and error, between Christ and antichrist, the engagement, however fought, shall be brought on by the opposition, by antichrist; for St. John, in the vision, saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, that is, against him who was called *Faithful and True*, and against his army, that is, against the multitude of saints constituting the *white horse* of verse 11.

Verse 20 *And the beast was taken, and with him the*

deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him

false prophet—The alliance between *the beast*, represented in verse 18 by *kings and captains*, which in their turn represent the oppressive and corrupt regal power of nominal, but unworthy Christian governments, and *the false prophet, that great city, the woman* which St. John saw sit upon this scarlet coloured beast, was seen to be such that when *the beast was taken*, in this decisive conflict, *with him* also, *the false prophet* was taken. And really, it seems impossible that the one could have been *taken* without the other, for the imagery representing them and their associations, connections, and operations, from the commencement of chap. xiii. to the close of this verse is such, representing them, not only as acting together, but as being so identical that they are antichrist, so that their destiny is the same. *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.*—Whatever this unrivalled and most fearfully awful imagery of being *cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone*, may represent, there is, at least, one exceedingly important lesson taught by it, that is, that error, that antichrist, will still continue to exist somewhere and somehow, in his own unchanged and unchangeable state and nature, which is in itself miserable, after that his power and influence for evil over the physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual interests of man, are entirely counteracted and destroyed by the superior power and influence of truth and purity, of Christ, of God.

Verse 21 *And the remnant were slain with the sword of*

that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth:—After that antichristian principles and influences shall have been utterly and for ever destroyed in Christendom, there will be neither let nor hinderance to the perfect and complete success and triumph of truth and purity over the superstitions, ignorance, errors, and corruptions of paganism, *the remnant*, which St. John in the vision beheld *slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse.*—And the Lord Jesus Christ, as even hating the garments stained by the flesh, as well as all flesh slain in sacrifice unto idols, represents here, by the spirit of prophecy, the spirit of almighty and eternal truth; his abhorrence of the vileness of that which so mars and corrupts the beauty, the purity, the sacredness, of true worship, by filthy vultures being *filled with the flesh* of idolaters, of the last, the remnant of idolaters.

CHAPTER XX.

1 *Satan bound for a thousand years.* 6 *The first resurrection: they are blessed that have part therein.* 7 *Satan let loose again.* 8 *Gog and Magog.* 10 *The devil cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.* 12 *The last and general resurrection.*

AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XX.

Verse 1 *And I saw an angel come down from heaven,*—This seems to be the same angel, who in chap. viii. 3, *came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and who took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast*

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

it into the earth ; and who, in chap. xiv. 18, came out from the altar, having power over fire ; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe ; for what but the almighty power of the Holy Spirit can in such a summary manner wield and dispose of the destinies of the *dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan?* And, *the key* which the Divine Spirit has, seems to be the light of truth. And this view of *the key of the bottomless pit*, here, so far from being contradicted by the note on chap. ix. 1, which may seem, to the casual observer, not to agree with this, upon examination, they corroborate and confirm each other, for there *the key of the bottomless pit* is employed to *open the pit*, out of which *the smoke* and darkness of ignorance and error issued and came forth to curse man ; whereas, here *the key* is employed after that *Satan* is chained and *cast into the pit*, to close it and *shut him up* there. And the *great chain in the hand* of this Divine Messenger, seems to be the gloriously bright and brightening, and almost infinitely extensive chain of influences, instrumentalities, and powers employed by this Almighty Messenger, to develop truth and purity, and to bind error and corruption, so as to effectually restrain them from doing mischief in society.

Verse 2 *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent,*—It does seem that it could not satisfy the desires of the benevolent heart, even of a good man, to contemplate *that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan*, that has been tormenting and destroying the family of man, for almost six thousand years, as being restrained for one thousand

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

years; but to contemplate pure benevolence blessing human society, in a redeemed and emancipated world, with the undimmed light of perfectly revealed truth, after the final and eternal destruction of error, of antichrist, and the binding of Satan for three hundred and sixty thousand years, the time indicated by the prophetic period of *a thousand years*, is so wonderfully refreshing to the believing soul, as to excite exceeding great joy and gladness. *And I saw an angel come down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

Verse 3 *And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up*,—The means to be employed in binding Satan, and the prison into which he is to be cast, are perfectly appropriate—light, which drives darkness back into its native pit, from which sin brought it forth, and truth, which restrains error. And here when light shall be universally diffused and spread abroad, so that there shall be no darkness at all; and when truth shall be everywhere received, and universally believed, error, together with the father of lies, shall be cast into the abyss of darkness, *the bottomless pit*, the native place of darkness and error; and when the Divine Spirit of almighty truth shall *set a seal upon Satan, he shall deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years*—the three hundred and sixty thousand years—*be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season*. Some have thought the loosing of Satan, though it be only for *a little season*, will greatly mar the beauty and glory of the crown of triumph-

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

antly victorious success, which truth shall wear during the long and peaceful millennial reign. But these seem not to consider the signal and eternal victory which shall be obtained over the *devil*, as we shall see in verse 10, when he shall be *cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet* are. Nor does it seem more unaccountably severe that the nations shall be subjected to the temptations of the devil, after having enjoyed such high privileges for such a length of time, than that all preceding ages and generations of men should have been subjected to the temptations of the same foe.

Verse 4 *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them*:—There is a striking parallel of this text in chap. i. 5, 6; and by comparing them we shall see that these are not the thrones of despots, or tyrants, or of unacceptable, or unrighteous rulers of any kind; but that they shall administer pure and equal justice and judgment for God in *Jesus Christ*, who is *the faithful* and true witness, and *the firstbegotten of the dead*, and *the prince of the kings of the earth*. *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* And in this vision of the millennial glory St. John also *saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them*. And in addition to this bright, lovely, glorious scene of justice, righteousness, and purity, in both church and government, which St. John

saw, which shall in the millennial age be realized and enjoyed to the full extent of its indescribable loveliness and excellence, in the renewed and greatly blessed earth, he also saw *the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.* By comparing this verse with chap. vi. 9, 10, 11, it becomes clearly manifest that after the last martyr shall have suffered, and quite probably very soon after, all martyrs for the truth shall rise and live, to reign with Christ; and it is here made almost equally clear that all those who have kept themselves perfectly pure from all kinds of idolatry, and fully believed God's holy word, and wrought righteousness, and continued faithful, shall arise with the martyrs of Jesus, to reign with Christ. And St. John saw, in the vision, that all these *lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.* Now, as to the nature and circumstances of this reign, there is quite a variety of opinions. The truth upon this great question seems to be about this, that when the *great whore of Babylon* shall have been destroyed, *the beast and the false prophet cast into the lake of fire*; when antichrist shall have finished his fiendish work, and been destroyed; when Satan shall have been chained and *cast into the bottomless pit*; and when Christ shall reign *King of kings, and Lord of lords*; when truth, righteousness, and purity shall universally prevail on earth, in church and in government, then shall all the pure in heart, wholly devoted unto God in life, and faithful unto death, be raised to life, to reign with Christ, to be all and always with the angels, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. For the body raised to life after dissolution shall be spiritual: 1 Corinthians, xv. 44, It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. Who then shall

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

doubt the possibility of the existence, among men, even in this world, of a holy church, and of righteous government, when there shall be no evil spirit to tempt to evil, but multitudes of blessed, holy, happy spirits, who *shall be priests of God and of Christ*, to attend, and bless, and cheer, and thrill the pure spirits of all the happy people of the happy, the glorious millennium?

Verse 5 *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.*—All those who believe God as did Abraham, all those who follow the Lord fully as did Caleb and Joshua, and all those who continue faithful unto death as did Simeon, and such only *shall have part in the first resurrection*. For St. John saw in the vision, after the first resurrection, that *the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished*. For,

Verse 6 *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection*:—For, being spiritual and immortal, they shall be worthy and capable of contributing to promote the gracious work of advancing the cause of God and of Christ, in the purification and salvation of men throughout this almost immense period of three hundred and sixty thousand years: *on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years*. This glorious and spiritual reign of righteousness by the ministry of angels, and especially by the ministry of the holy souls, the *saints* raised to life, immortal and eternal, for such a length of time on earth among men, shall redound to the greatness of the triumphant victory of Christ

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

over antichrist and Satan, on their own field of action, the earth, as he did over death in his own dominions, the grave.

Verse 7 *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison*,—This temporary release of Satan out of the abyss of darkness is destined soon to result in his eternal incarceration *in the lake of fire, burning with brimstone*.

Verse 8 *And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth*,—That is, in all parts of the world. No favored spot shall be exempt from this last trial by being tempted of the devil, as was Jesus Christ also, after that he had fasted forty days. *Gog and Magog* seem to be general names for all nations; and as such, they seem very appropriately to represent all. *Gog*, haste, ardent desire to go, closely allied to *Agog*, in a state of desire, highly excited by eagerness after an object; and *Magog*, not in haste—*ma*, in music, signifying not. That is, all which are in haste being tempted, and all which are not in haste to gather themselves together to battle; or, all which Satan has an ardent desire to visit, and those which he is not so eager to encounter; or, all which Satan ardently desires to bring, and those which he does not so ardently desire to bring to the last, the final conflict between light and darkness, between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. And this conflict shall take place after that the world has become fully inhabited; after that it has been so signally blessed with a pure and happy people for hundreds of thousands of years, and so prepared for an innumerable population.

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

For St. John, in the vision, saw *the number of them as the sand of the sea*.

Verse 9 *And they went up on the breadth of the earth,—* It seems from this, as well as from the preceding verse, that in the last great conflict, after which wars shall cease finally and for ever, all nations of men shall be involved; for St. John, in the vision, saw that *they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city*. Whether the saints of God shall, at the time of this great conflict, be actually rendezvoused, as an armed force, to resist by violence the hostile approach of the nations of the earth, is questionable; for *the camp of the saints, and the beloved city*, are phrases which seem to signify one and the same thing. And *the beloved city* evidently stands in strong contrast with corrupt *Babylon*; and actually is the pure church of the millennial age, the whole body of God's faithful people, who yield not to this last temptation of the devil. The means to be employed by Divine Providence, in meeting the last onset of Satan's host, and of destroying them, it seems will be, if not electric explosions, in the clouds of heaven, sending *down streams of fire from God out of heaven to devour them*, something which is represented by this.

Verse 10 *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,—* After the destruction of antichrist, and after the last army that Satan could muster

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

against the saints of God was destroyed, St. John saw, in the vision, that *the devil himself that deceived the nations*, and collected this vast army for the destruction of the saints, the event of which was their own destruction, was *cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, perpetually, for ever and ever—eternally.*

Verse 11 *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it,*—Similar to the *white cloud* upon which one *sat, like unto the Son of man*; and similar to the *white horse*, upon which him that *sat* was called *Faithful and True*; but still more glorious is the *great white throne*, which seems to be constituted of all those pure and faithful saints, each one of whom enjoyed a glorious part in the first resurrection; and all of whom have, for three hundred and sixty thousand years, *been priests of God and of Christ*, and have *reigned with Christ as kings and priests unto God and his Father*. The saints, composing this *throne*, do not seem destined to be judged at the last day with the rest of mankind, being already glorified. Now, the perfectly righteous government and immaculate church of the millennial age, and especially after the destruction of Satan, could very well abide the presence of the throne, that is, the saints already, and long since, raised to life immortal and eternal, revealed to them clearly now, for the first time, by their own sudden change to immortality, as described by St. Paul, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; but they *fled from the face of him who sat on the throne*. But they could find *no place* of concealment from the presence of the Omnipotent, the Omniscient, the Omnipresent. *And I saw a great white*

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Verse 12 *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God;*—In addition to the awe and reverence of all those who had continued firm and faithful under the last temptation, and indeed, all who survived after the last battle, and who had been changed from mortal to spiritual beings, so being able to recognize their Lord, St. John here, in the vision, also *saw the dead, small and great*, that is, all who had not been previously raised to life, and those now changed to immortality, never having died at all—St. John, we say, saw all these *stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life*: These books, the book of life, as well as all the rest, are emblems, representing character. And out of these faithful and infallible records of the true character of each and every individual, those now raised to life, whom St. John *saw stand before God, were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

Verse 13 *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them;*—This enumeration, which is so brief, but so comprehensive, of the places from which the dead come forth, seems to be specially intended to represent the unlimited, the absolute universality, of the general resurrection. For the sea, the most extensive grave-yard on the face of the earth, *gave up*

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

the dead which were in it; and the very state and place of the dead, death and hades, delivered up the dead which were in them. And St. John saw that a just and righteous sentence was passed upon each and every individual of this vast assembly, according to his true character; *for they were judged every man according to their works.* And is not the absolute certainty of this all-important fact made the more emphatic by this repetition in verses 12, 13?

Verse 14 *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.*—St. John, in the vision, saw death so completely vanquished, that the very state and place of the dead, *death and hades, were cast into the lake of fire:* so that, henceforth, death, or hades, shall be found nowhere but in *the lake of fire.* For this, and this alone, is the second death.

Verse 15 *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*—We have seen, in St. John's vision, *the corrupt city, Babylon, destroyed, to be found no more at all:* we have seen *the beast and the false prophet cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone;* we have seen *Satan cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are;* and we have seen *death and hell cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death;* and then, and not till then, did St. John see that *whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.* And how could it be otherwise? For all those in whose character was found the principle of immortal life, which is purity, holiness, by the blood of the Lamb, *were found written in the book of life;* consequently, having in themselves the principle of immortal, eternal life, they are gathered into

the eternal city, *the new Jerusalem*: whereas, those in whose character is found the elements of death, which is impurity, unholiness, and who, having become spiritual, consequently immortal, *are cast into the lake of fire*—the place, and the only place, where the state of eternal death is found. For *this*, and this alone, *is the second death*.

CHAPTER XXI.

1 *A new heaven and a new earth.* 10 *The heavenly Jerusalem, with a full description thereof.* 23 *She needeth no sun, the glory of God is her light.* 24 *The kings of the earth bring their riches unto her.*

AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XXI.

Verse 1 *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth*:—By comparing chap. xix. 7, 8, 9, with chap. xxi. 2, we shall see that the opening of this chapter presents the farther development of the scenes in the commencement of the millennial age; consequently, we may understand quite clearly that, *the new heaven* is the renewed and purified church of God, after the destruction of the *corrupt city, Babylon*; and that *the new earth* is the perfectly just and righteous Christian governments of the world, after *the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone* and after *Satan is chained and cast into the bottomless pit*, as in the beginning of chap. xx. 4. *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them*; for the corrupt church and unrighteous governments were no more for a long and happy

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be their God.*

period. *For the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*—For the church after the first resurrection is not to be corrupted any more at all; not so however, with governments, for after the three hundred and sixty thousand years' millennial reign, *Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth.*

Verse 2 *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,*—The same *beloved city* that St. John saw *compassed about* by the *nations*, which shall yield to the temptation of Satan—*coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*, which is the church of God in the millennial age. *The holy city, new Jerusalem*, which is identical with *the camp of the saints, the beloved city, the bride, the Lamb's wife*, is not the hewn stones, bricks, and mortar, constituting the architecture of a physical city, but the people, the saints of God. This may, and most certainly does, present a view of a more advanced state of the beauty, purity, and glory of the *beloved city, the bride, the new Jerusalem*, than any of the preceding pictures, drawn by the same sacred pencil. And this holy church, by the providence and grace of God, shall descend to the millennial age from the Protestant branches of the church harmonized and purified. *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

Verse 3 *And I heard a great voice out of heaven*—This

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

great and glorious voice of unmixed, unadulterated, and no longer contested truth, most triumphantly calls attention to the beauty, the glory, the divinity of his work among and for men, *saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*—And henceforth the true God only shall be *their God*, for there shall be neither idol nor idolater any more at all.

Verse 4 *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;*—This fidelity to the true worship shall so meet with the divine approbation, that the blessing of God shall so rest upon the people, all the people, that no weeping shall be heard, and tears shall be neither seen nor shed. And moreover, the time shall immediately succeed this long, happy, glorious period, when even *death shall be no more, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things will then have passed away*, to return no more for ever.

Verse 5 *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.*—St. John, in the vision, saw and clearly understood that it was *the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the King of saints*, the King of glory, the Creator of all things, who has promised to restore all things, *who sat upon the throne, and said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful;* for they are the words of him who *sat upon the white horse*, who himself was called *Faithful and True*.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Verse 6 *And he said unto me, It is done.*—Having purified the church and established justice and judgment in government, by banishing error and misrule from among men, and by fully enlightening and elevating the mind, by renewing and cultivating the heart, and by righteous moral principle, establishing a long, peaceful, and happy reign of truth and righteousness, and so having thus prepared all who had any taste for the beautiful, the true, the pure, the sublime, the heavenly, the godlike, for the enjoyment of the presence and glory of God himself, Christ *said unto St. John* in the vision, *It is done.* He who in the beginning created all things, has in the end renewed all things. And he says, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.* And, if pure living waters are multitudes of true and faithful believers, the object of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, is *the fountain of the water of life.*

Verse 7 *He that overcometh shall inherit all things;*—By overcoming error and inheriting the presence, joy, and glory of him who is Lord over all his works, who is all in all, the victor *shall inherit all things;* with the infallible and immutable word of promise of him who is *Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,* that *I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

Verse 8 *But the fearful and unbelieving,*—These two general classes seem to include all those whose greatest sin

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and

is the want of true faith in God, and who, nevertheless, have been taught of him, and know the exceeding great and precious promises to them that believe. The other classes enumerated, though not a full catalogue, may however, as leading classes in open rebellion against, and in defiance of, God's law, well represent all the rest, who shall not inherit life, but who shall have what they have prepared themselves for, eternal death. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

Verse 9 *And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me,*—This seems to be the same *angel* which shewed unto St. John the judgment of the great whore, the corrupt church, *great Babylon*; and the context here seems to show quite clearly that this *angel* is the messenger of truth, but the scene presented here is precisely the opposite, in every respect, of the one presented previously by the same messenger, for *the angel*, in this interview, *talked with St. John, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife*, the pure and holy church of the millennial age; for here commences another view of the same period passed over in the first eight verses of this chapter, for *the bride, the Lamb's wife, the great city, the holy Jerusalem*, is the same as *the holy city, new Jerusalem*, in verse 2.

Verse 10 *And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain*,—St. John, in the spirit of prophecy, was

high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven, from God,

11 Having the glory of God : and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal ;

carried away to the contemplation of great and good government, as well as a pure and holy church ; for the governments of the millennial age, being purely Christian, and administered upon Christian principles, were seen by the apostle to be so much elevated in purity and sublimity above all pagan governments that, though he represents them by the same figure employed to represent pagan governments, while they existed, yet he calls them *a great and high mountain*. And then and there, where he found no unchristian government to hinder the advancement, or mar the beauty, of a holy Christian church, *the angel shewed him that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God*. And now, can any one, after what we have already seen in this chapter, in connection with what we have previously seen of *the bride, the Lamb's wife*, entertain any doubt that this *great city, the holy Jerusalem*, is not inhabited by merely, but composed of, the saints of God ?

Verse 11 *Having the glory of God* :—The prophet Zechariah, in chap. ii. 5, has these words: For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her (Jerusalem, the holy city, being named in the preceding verse) a wall of fire round about, and will be glory in the midst of her. *And her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal*. Now, if with this verse we compare verses 18 and 19, and especially the use of the jasper stone, and with this compare, also, 1 Peter, chap. ii., we may understand the building of this wonderful city, especially the wall of it, better. St. Peter calls the Lord Jesus Christ a living stone,

12 And had a wall great and high, *and* twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel :

13 On the east three gates ; on the north three gates ; on the south three gates ; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

disallowed, indeed, of men, but chosen of God, and precious. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious : the same is made the head of the corner.

Verse 12 *And had a wall great and high*,—As we have seen, this great city, the church, the saints of the millennial age, shall have for their wall of defense the LORD JEHOVAH. *And—the city—had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.* These twelve gates, with their messengers, the twelve patriarchs and all their tribes, were employed by God's providence to initiate mankind into the sacred mysteries of the divine economy, which is fully developed by the perfect light of the Christian, and ultimately of the millennial age. And even this introductory light, communicating a knowledge of the divine nature, the will, the requirements of God, went forth in all directions ; for there were

Verse 13 *On the east three gates ; on the north three gates ; on the south three gates ; and on the west three gates.*

Verse 14 *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations*,—St. Paul tells the Ephesians that they, though Gentiles, are, by grace through faith, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord : in whom

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with

ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit. *And in them*—the twelve foundations of this spiritual city—the *names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb*. We take it for granted that St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, and Zechariah, are not all mistaken about the spirituality of this edifice, this building, this *great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God*.

Verse 15 *And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof*.—The golden reed, or perfect rule of rectitude, with which this messenger of unerring, infallible truth was furnished, enabled him to estimate and compare justly, and properly, the true character of all the material entering into this vast structure, *the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof*.

Verse 16 *And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth*:—If there is any definite meaning in the peculiar form of this great city, except the perfect rectitude and purity of character of all the saints of which it is composed, it seems to be, that this purity of character, as well as durability of spiritual nature, is immutable and unending. *And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs*. This number may be taken merely to correspond with the original number of tribes of the thousands of Israel. And with the immutability and indestructibility correspond, also, the elevation, the sublimity, the divinity, of the spiritually pure and holy character of the saints composing this God-built city; for, *the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal*.

the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

Verse 17 *And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits*,—This number, being the square of the number taken above, for the number of tribes of his saints expresses, as well as numbers can do, the sacred, the divine character of this wall of defense round about the holy city. *The measure of a man*, the man Christ Jesus, *that is, of the angel*, the Angel of the covenant, the LORD, Jehovah.

Verse 18 *And the building of the wall of it was jasper*:—In addition to what has been said in the note on verse 11 of the jasper stone, we need only add here, that the structure, and the first and great glory of the embellishments of the sacred wall, *was jasper*. A very appropriate and singular figure, in addition to those employed above, is here introduced to represent the purity and glory of the saints composing this *holy city*. *And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass*—combining in this figure the purity and brilliancy of the finest metal with the most perfect transparency.

Verse 19 *And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones*.—St. John, after making the important announcement that *the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones*, only enumerates twelve, which, though they represent the number of the apostles, cannot represent all of them individually; for the first one represents Christ,

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

the chief corner-stone, as we have seen. But St. Paul on this subject is somewhat elaborate. To the Ephesians he says that he, Christ, gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: . . . from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body into the edifying of itself in love. The first, the jasper, in the foundation of this spiritual building, representing Christ, the rest seem to represent all the embellishing supports of truth in the Christian age.

Verse 21 *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls;*—These twelve gates, or pearls, represent the twelve patriarchs and their tribes, and as St. John has informed us that *every several gate was of one pearl*, and as the religious light transmitted by the patriarchal and Mosaic economy, was not a perfect transparency, transmitting the undimmed rays of the light of truth in their perfect beauty and clearness, but only adumbrant of the true light, this particular kind of *pearl* of *every several gate* seems to be that of a translucent silvery whiteness, which transmits light without permitting objects to be seen. *And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.* The street was of the same material as the city itself, as in verse 18: see note there.

22 And I saw no temple therein : for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it : and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

Verse 22 *And I saw no temple therein* :—As *the holy city* is the saints of God, so *the temple of it* is not the place of their worship, but the object of their devotions, *the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb*. Not that the saints of the millennial age will probably discontinue the use of temples of public worship, but these shall not then, as now, get between the worshiper and his God, as the object of worship.

Verse 23 *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it* :—Neither shall temples of public worship be so much temples of instruction then as now ; for then shall be fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah, chap. xxxi. 34 : And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD : for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD : so that the perfect light of perfectly developed truth shall not be wanting to any, much less the borrowed and reflected light of former ages ; for St. John saw that *the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*.

Verse 24 *And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it* :—If testimony was still wanting that this chapter is properly applied to the millennial age, it is found here ; for *the nations shall WALK in the light of it*. And as error has been utterly destroyed, and Satan chained, it seems that all *nations are saved to walk in this light*. And as farther testimony that this is so, *the kings*, without

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

restriction or limitation, all *the kings of the earth do bring*, as a willing and reasonable sacrifice, *their glory and honour into it*; so that they too are saints of God, part and parcel of *the holy city*.

Verse 25 *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day*:—The unobscured and uninterrupted light of perfectly developed truth as it shall shine in the millennial age, is well represented by perpetual day: *for there shall be no night there*; that is, no moral darkness at all.

Verse 26 *And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it*.—The glorious, the perfect light of divine truth, as it shall shine in the minds, the hearts, and the lives of all within the sacred precincts of the God-built city, shall not only cause that *the kings*, all the kings of the earth shall *bring their glory and honour into it*, but also, that *they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations*, all the nations, *into it*.

Verse 27 *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth*,—While all the honor and glory of all the kings and nations *shall be brought into it*, *there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth*, in any way, either in principle, or in practice; nothing that tends to evil in practice, that *worketh abomination*; or that is opposed to truth and purity in principle, that *maketh a lie*: *but they*, and they only, *which are written in the Lamb's book of life*, they who have within them the principles of purity and truth, the principle of *life immortal, eternal life*.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 *The river of the water of life.* 2 *The tree of life.* 5 *The light of the city of God is himself.* 9 *The angel will not be worshipped.* 18 *Nothing may be added to the word of God, nor taken therefrom.*

AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life; which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

NOTES.—CHAPTER XXII.

Verse 1 *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life,*—The vast and the ever-active multitude of the saints of God, composing *the holy city*, the pure church of the millennial age, upon which the glory of God and the Lamb sheds such a radiance, as he sits enthroned upon it, is most beautifully represented here by a *pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

Verse 2 *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river,*—In these figures, *the river of life*, and *the tree of life*, St. John's allusion to the river which went out of Eden to water the garden of the LORD, and the tree of life in the midst of the garden, is quite manifest. And whatever may have been the meaning of them there, St. John's use of them in this connection seems to be quite apparent. And as we have seen that *the pure river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb*, is the saints of God, in this more than restored Eden of the LORD, to which is now added the splendors of the indescribable glories of the enthroned Lamb of God, so *the tree of life* is the purely Christian government, after that *the kings*, all the kings, and *the nations*, all the nations, have brought *their glory and*

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

4 And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads.

5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no

honour into the city of God, the new Jerusalem, the glorious church of the millennial age: this perennial tree, this perpetually fruit-yielding government, sending forth its benign influence everywhere, when even the forms, the foliage of this baptized, this pure government, shall have corrected and perfectly cured all the wrongs of the last nation, then shall it be truly said that, in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, the tree of life, which bare twelve fruits, yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations.

Verse 3 *And there shall be no more curse:*—After what we have seen in the resplendent light of St. John's vision, we are prepared to hear this saying, which, to poor, vile human nature, is such a hard saying, so that now, instead of the *curse*, all shall be blessing and blessed: and *the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.* The church shall be the LORD's, and the government shall be the LORD's; and his servants shall serve him:

Verse 4 *And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.*—No intervening cloud then, as now, shall obscure the face and favor of God; but the privileges of the saints shall be high and holy, and they shall be appreciated; and their knowledge of the truth shall be perfect, so that they shall follow the LORD fully in all things; and their duty shall be plain, and they shall do it; for *they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.*

Verse 5 *And there shall be no night there;*—The darkness having passed, all the darkness having passed, quite entirely

candle, neither light of the sun ; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, These sayings *are faithful and true* : and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

7 Behold, I come quickly : blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

away, and the true light having arisen, in all the resplendent glory of its beauty and brightness, they no longer need types, and symbols, and sacrifices, adumbrant of the true light ; neither to have the fact reiterated that the true light now shines ; nor that each should be urged by his fellow servant to behold the Lamb of God ; for each shall receive light from the original Source of light ; *for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

Verse 6 *And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true* :—The antecedent of the personal pronoun *he*, here, though found as far back as verse 9, of the preceding chapter, is not encumbered with so much obscurity as in chap. xix. 9, though St. John comes near making the same fatal mistake here as there, of worshipping a highly honored, and greatly distinguished fellow servant, thinking, no doubt, that he was falling before the Lamb of God, the Messenger of the covenant, the LORD Jehovah. The angel positively and unequivocally affirms that, *these sayings are faithful and true* ; consequently these predictions shall in their season have their fulfillment. *And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*—Portions of the prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures, as well as much of St. John's vision, are yet to be fulfilled, which must most assuredly be done.

Verse 7 *Behold, I come quickly* :—*The Lord God of*

8 And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

9 Then saith he unto me, See *thou do it not*: for I am they fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

the holy prophets ratifies here what had just been so positively and so confidently stated by his angel, and pronounces a blessing upon the diligently true and faithful, who *keep the sayings* and piously perform the teachings of this book. *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

Verse 8 *And I John saw these things and heard them.*—Some of St. John's information in this vision of unparalleled grandeur and sublimity, was received by listening to the voice of an angel sent from God to teach him, and some of it by scenes presented to his mind so vividly, that he says, *I saw these things.*—And St. John was so transported with these rapturous visions, that on two occasions he mistook the messenger sent by the LORD Jehovah for the LORD himself. And he says, *When I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.*

Verse 9 *Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not:*—Possibly the meaning of this passage might be equally clear and even more forcible by rejecting the supplied nominative and verb and giving it the form of a question: *Then saith he unto me, Seest thou not? for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book:* consequently, I am not a proper object of worship at all; there is one God; to him, and to him only, the true worshipers pay Divine honors; therefore *worship God.*

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

Verse 10 *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book:—Seal, or suppress, them not, but contrariwise record them; that the blessing of chap. i. 3, may rest upon the diligent reader and the faithful hearer of these wonderful records, for, Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*—The corresponding sentiments in the opening and closing language of this great prophecy, in these verses and others, seem to indicate its entireness and perfection as a whole. And the perfect certainty of the fulfillment of all these predictions is the same, as if the time for the fulfillment of each and every part was now at the door. And when all shall have been fulfilled,

Verse 11 *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still:—As the introductory, the preparatory state, for all moral character, shall then have passed away, the mutability of all moral creatures will have passed away with it; so that the unjust, the unrighteous, in a governmental and social capacity, shall be unjust still; and the filthy, the impure in religion, shall be filthy still; and when the righteous, the perfectly upright in all governmental and social relations, shall be righteous still; and the holy, the entirely pure in religion, shall be holy still.*—Whether this verse, in connection with the developments of the fifth seal, with other portions of this prophecy and other Scriptures, which seem to be appli-

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they

cable to this subject, do really teach that the unchangeable fixedness of moral character by the great atonement, through faith in Jesus Christ, shall not be immutably established until the probation of all moral creatures shall end together, is a question in theology which we do not feel inclined to try to settle definitely. But then, if not till then, *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

Verse 12 *And, behold, I come quickly;*—Whether the term *quickly* is to be applied here according to its present acceptation, or whether, as we have so often stated, it applies rather to the certainty than to the time of Christ's coming, is a question of comparatively little consequence to us; but what Christ himself says he will do when he shall come, is of infinite importance, and of eternal interest to all—to pass a righteous sentence of eternal reward. *Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.* And now, to give infallible assurance to each individual and to all men, that this sentence of eternal reward will be passed upon the infallible principle of inflexible righteousness and of eternal truth, we have only to compare the following verse with chap. i. 8, to see who shall be the judge.

Verse 13 *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*—Chap i. 8—*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

Verse 14 *Blessed are they that do his commandments,*—

may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

15 For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star.

The allusion here is quite manifest to the original commandment, given to man in the paradise of God, which, while faithfully observed, secured to him the *right to the tree of life*, upon the principle of perfect obedience; but since the fall, *life* being obtained by faith in Jesus Christ, so that *the right to the tree of life*, in the restored paradise, *the holy city, the new Jerusalem*, is secured by faith in Christ, which can be exercised only by the initiated, through the gates of the knowledge of his will and commandments; and, *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

Verse 15 *For without are dogs*,—This is in allusion to the well-known practice among the Jews, who considered themselves the only people taught of God, of calling all Gentiles *dogs*; which, however, applies here only to those who have not the knowledge of God, or who fail to improve the knowledge they have. Such as are superstitious, and not simple-hearted and sincere on the subject of religion; those who are impure and cruel in social life; those who worship other things besides God; and all those who adhere not firmly to the truth in all things, from the sacred love which they have for it. *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

Verse 16 *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you*

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

these things in the churches.—This former part of this verse has its parallel in chap. i. 1, 11. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.* And these important revelations are not exclusive; they are not for these few individual congregations alone, but they are for all men, for all times and places, unto whom the knowledge of it shall come. And it is the duty of those who have it to communicate it to those who have it not. And especially is it for every individual of every nation of the millennial age. *I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.* This latter clause of this verse has its parallel in chap. v. 5, in which the elder comforts the weeping John by calling his attention to the fact that *the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.* Christ, in this latter clause of the verse before us, tells us quite plainly that he is the Creator and the descendant of David; that he is both God and man; that he is the all-glorious, the infinitely *bright* and illuminating *star* from which all others receive and reflect their borrowed light. *I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star.*

Verse 17 *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.*—St. John, in this most glorious part of his entirely unrivaled vision, seeing Jesus exalted, both Lord and Christ, after that *the beast and the false prophet* had been cast into the

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto *lake of fire, burning with brimstone*; and after that *Satan* had been *bound, and cast into the bottomless pit*; so that *there was no more curse*; but the tendency being to purity and truth, and *the throne of God and of the Lamb* being fully and perfectly established in *the holy city, new Jerusalem*; and Christ having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost; St. John saw him shed forth in all the plenitude of his almighty power and grace. For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. And now, all opposition having been put to silence, St. John hears extended to man—yea, even unto man—the inviting voice of the Holy Spirit, in connection with the sweet intonations of the gentle voice of the redeemed and purified church, *the prepared bride, the Lamb's wife, as a chaste virgin*, absolutely immaculate, because *she hath washed her robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*, saying, *Come*. And as there is now no opposition within man, or about him, so that the invitation is not only welcomed, but received with exceeding great joy, he *that heareth* shall repeat the invitation, and say, *Come*. And as there shall be no fondness left in the desires of man but for righteousness, purity, and truth, he *that is athirst* shall come. But even in the brightness of the glory of the millennial age man's will shall still preside upon the throne, and his actions shall be voluntary, even in the reception of the greatest boon, *life, immortal, eternal life*. And *whosoever will, shall take the water of life freely*. And the Spirit and the bride say, *Come*. And let him that heareth say, *Come*. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

Verse 18 *For I testify unto every man that heareth the*

these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book :

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

words of the prophecy of this book,—The inestimable blessing of prophetic vision having been vouchsafed unto man in the beginning, and having been continued for more than four thousand years, and St. John, the great apostolic prophet, having finished, by special and most wonderful communications from God, this marvelously great, general prophecy, scanning the past, and fully comprehending all the future, and so giving it to the world, instead of a succession of living prophets, for all coming time, places upon record here an interdict against any man who shall have the temerity to go when God has not sent him ; attempting to reveal unto his fellows what is coming upon the church and the world, otherwise than by pointing out the meaning and application of prophecy, already extant in God's book, by interpreting the symbolic language in which prophecy stands recorded. *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book :*

Verse 19 *And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy*,—An equally severe interdict is here recorded against *any man* whose temerity shall be so great as to dare to lay sacrilegious hands upon these divinely sacred things and diminish aught, even from the anathemas herein recorded against error and corruption, as against him who shall have added thereto ; for such recklessness of the interests of righteousness, purity, and truth, evinces the fact that he has not implanted within him the

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

sacredly vital principle of immortal, eternal *life*, obtained by faith in Jesus Christ; consequently, *if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.* And, not being a polished stone, fitted and prepared for God's spiritual building, the place, *the part* which he might, and should have occupied, shall God *take out of the holy city.* And, all and singly, universally and without exception, shall God take from such a one *the things which are written in this book.*

Verse 20 *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen.*—This very brief, though truly comprehensive verse, has its corresponding sentiments in chap. i. 2, 3, 5, 7; so that here, at the very close of this prophecy, excepting only the benediction, we find again reiterated this corresponding completeness of all the parts of this great and very greatly complicated, but not the less entire and absolutely perfect whole. It is almost infinite condescension in the LORD Jehovah, to reveal unto man—who has rebelled against him—his duty, his interest, and his destiny; but it is much more condescending to *testify*, in such an endless variety of ways, and by such indubitable evidence, to the inflexibly binding force of these high and holy obligations, the infinite value of these undying interests, and the eternal truth of his immortal destiny, in connection with the infallible testimony that all *these things* shall be fulfilled, with the same absolute certainty that Christ himself shall *come: Amen.* To all of which St. John, from a full heart, could not forbear making the response: *Even so, come, Lord Jesus.* It may not be improper here to suggest that, at the coming of the *Lord Jesus*, the urgent and gracious invita-

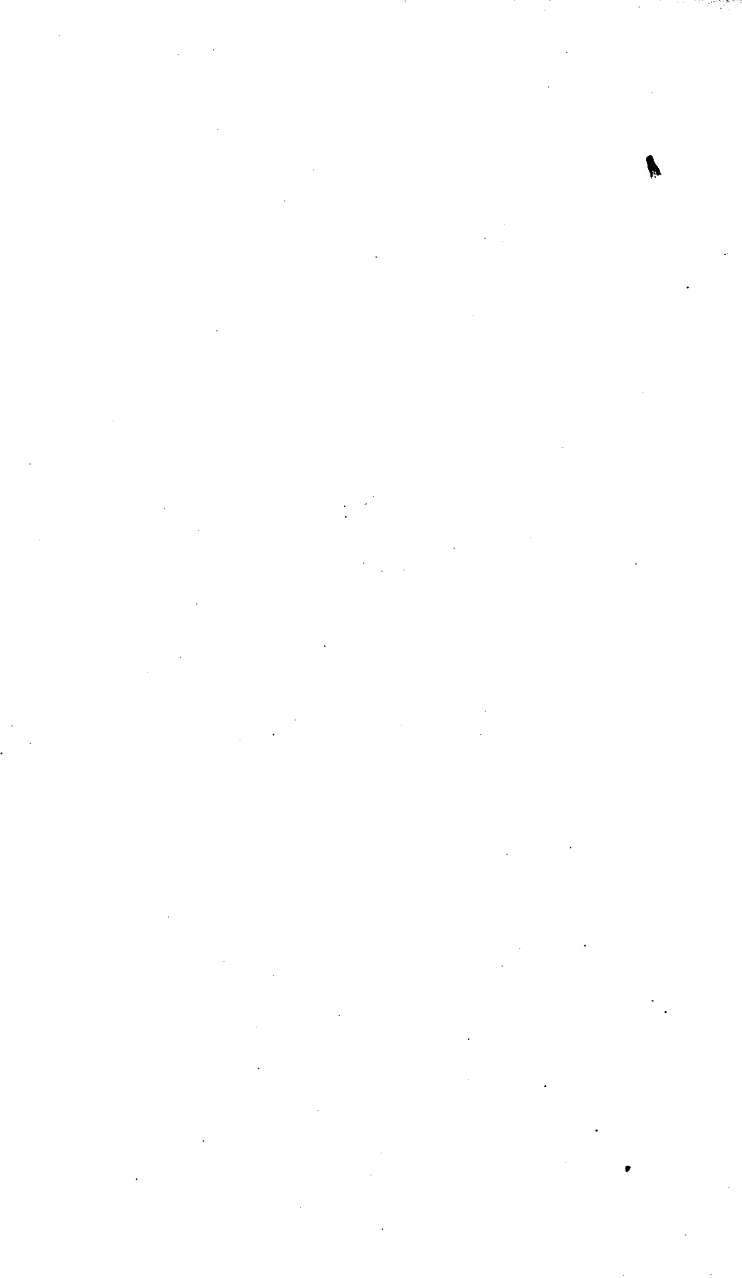
21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

tion of verse 17, which shall then have been ringing, and so musically reverberating during all the long and happy ages of the reign of millennial righteousness, may then be heard in all the heavenly sweetness of wooing divine love, for the last time. And it is most certainly a subject of overwhelmingly great and eternally important interest, with all the light of perfectly revealed truth shining full upon it, to inquire whether this invitation shall have been a standing one to all moral creatures throughout all ages ; and whether it shall at last be extended to all moral creatures together, so that each individual shall be put to the test, upon his own free choice, to accept the gospel provision, on God's terms, and to his glory, through faith in Jesus Christ, so that *who-soever will, shall take the water of life freely*. And that the eternal fixedness of moral character, the immutable destiny of all moral creatures, may then, and not till then, be inflexibly established, as in verse 11, when *he that is unjust, shall be unjust still : and he which is filthy, shall be filthy still : and he that is righteous, shall be righteous still : and he that is holy, shall be holy still*. We must acknowledge that we should be exceedingly pleased to see the most eminent ability employed in a diligent, faithful, and even an exhaustive investigation of this great subject ; for, certainly, infidelity might in this way be disarmed of some of its keenest weapons against Christianity. Who that has the ability will have the nerve to examine God's word thoroughly on this great question, and will then give the result of his investigations to the world ?

Verse 21 *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*—This great prophecy being dedicated and addressed specially, in chap. i. 11, *unto the seven churches which*

are in Asia, though not designed exclusively for them, by any means, this benediction, corresponding with the dedication, is pronounced to rest specially upon these seven churches; but, coming as it does, with all the sacred glow of God's inspiration, from the loving heart of the disciple whom Jesus loved, it extends to all, *whosoever will* be blessed of God, in Christ Jesus. And it should burn its sentiments of grace and love in ineffaceable impressions upon every soul who shall either see or hear these last endearingly sweet words of the glorious APOCALYPSE: THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN.

THE END.



BS 473 693.
3826 Bible. N.T. Revelation. Eng.
.G 22 Notes illustrative by St
John the Divine in
Revelation of Jesus Christ

NOV 2 1913
13 75
J. Goldfeld
D. McCallough
NOV 10 1913
5-27-14.

HARPER STORAGE

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



56 505 110

